

### Temptation

There are two ways in which a person can be tempted. The first is from within, and the second is external. If we give in to either, then that becomes sin, and sin when it is finished eventually brings death. There is absolutely no sin whatever in just being tempted. There was no sin in the beginning by Adam and Eve just being tempted, but their sin lay in the fact that they submitted to the temptation. They were tempted by an external tempter, but the desire came from within them. What they should have said, and what should be a guide to all of us also when confronted by temptation is shown by Jesus when he spoke so harshly to Peter, “*get thou behind me Satan.*” Satan is an adversary, and Peter was saying things adverse or contrary to the plan of God.

If we sit down and go right through the Bible from cover to cover, you will not find anywhere that God tempts men and women to do evil. If trials and temptations were sent by God, then men and women would not be able to resist them; it would amount to the fact that God would literally be inviting or making men and women sin. This is far from the mind of God, for He wants everyone to come to Him and repent. James 1:13-14

*Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.*

We concede the fact that God does allow for temptation; in fact He often places us in such a position where we may be tempted, primarily to see if we are going to remain faithful to Him. But He is always there to strengthen us, and you can be quite sure that there is a limit to the temptations which He requires men and women to undergo, 1 Cor. 10:13.

*There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*

God knows the capability of each person and He has never yet asked anyone to go through more than they could endure. You may think of faithful men who had to endure until death, but the Apostle Paul who was inspired by God to write these words endured untold sufferings and trials but still counted it an honour to go through such things so that he might eventually win Christ. This meant far more to him than all earthly possessions. There is no doubt that God was here, testing Paul to see if he would keep all the things which he had vowed. This applies to all who have suffered for the sake of keeping God’s Word pure.

A very striking example in the Old Testament was the test that God put Abraham to when He commanded him to offer his own son. Because of the Promise which God had made to Abraham and for it to be fulfilled, he knew in his own heart that God “*would not try him more than he was able to bear,*” and with the trial made a way of escape. Abraham was confident when he assured his servants that he would return with his son Isaac. Genesis 22:5

*And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you,*

The trial of his faith was done through patience (James 1:3-5) and this attribute should be foremost in the armour of a true disciple or follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. Without patience no victory over sin can hope to be won. Romans 5:3-4

*And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope:*

External temptations often come from friends or workmates, and may ask you do something which you feel in your heart that is wrong in the sight of God. This is what temptation is; but you can rest assured that if you are prepared to do your part, then God will always find a way of escape just as He did for Abraham. By not following the temptation, you will find out that you will probably be respected by your friends for your stand.

Never think you are alone in temptation. Jesus who is our pattern to follow was tried and tempted in “all points as we are,” and never once did he submit to the workings of sin, and the reason for this was that his mind was full of God’s Word. In his temptation in the wilderness, he had an answer; a ready answer for each proposition which was put to him and that only came from his constant meditation and study of the Scripture.

Now if Jesus is our example and we use him as a guide as to just how far we can go in trying to please God, then at all times look to him and, he will be there to present your pleas and petitions to God. Do you ever wonder why God wants to try us? If you do, then the answer lies in the fact that He loves you. He does not want us to be weak and feeble minded, but rather He wants us to develop a character well pleasing to Him. Character can only be developed by overcoming temptation. Christ’s victory over temptation is our guide. And to bring the matter home to us, we ask: where would we be if the road to the Kingdom of God is smooth and rosy without any obstructions? You don’t go round obstructions, but rather do you remove them.