

TACKLING TEMPTATIONS
#1 – HOW TEMPTATION WORKS

Intro: Sick and tired of fighting temptations of life... and losing? Here's how you can tackle temptation... and win. First, let's understand how temptation works...

Word Wealth – **Temptation/trial** (Greek: πειρασμο – peirasmos) 1) Attraction, enticement, and persuasion to sin that is ultimately self-destructive; 2) A test or trial that is allowed by God with beneficial spiritual growth if successfully handled. Every trial has a flipside temptation, and every temptation has a flipside trial.

When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He tempt anyone, but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.
James 1:13-15

I. How Temptation Starts in Us

- **Through our own evil** _____ ... (James 1:14)
 - 1) Our "sin nature" – though we are capable of good, we are not basically good, but sinful. We have a drive for independence from God's authority; the right to do our own thing.
 - 2) Our "sin areas" – areas in our lives that are weak and prone to sin. The Apostle Paul calls this our "flesh".
- **Through Satan's** _____. Satan is real and exercises supernatural influence through deception and manipulation. But... we make the choice to give in. (Genesis 3:1)
- **God never** _____ **us**. God is always truthful, holy, loving, and good. But He can permit and use temptation as a test and opportunity for spiritual victory and growth.

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?'" The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'" "You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.
Genesis 3:1-6

II. How Temptation Attracts Us

- **It** _____ **us by making the bad look good, and the good look bad.** It makes the bad look like something we "need" for security, significance, or pleasure; and God as "cosmic kill-joy" for prohibiting it. (vs. 5)
- **It** _____ **us from a God focus.** Our focus is on the object of temptation, rather than God's better-way spiritual alternatives.
- **It** _____ **itself by appearing attractive.** It will look beautiful, exciting, and pleasurable.
- **It** _____ **personal fulfillment.** This fulfillment can be in such areas as acceptance, success, sophistication, worldly knowledge and experiences, or curiosity.

III. How Temptation Lies to Us

- *It* _____ *God's truth*. It brings us to openly question God's truthfulness, goodness, and knowledge.
- *It* _____ *God's warnings*. It denies the consequences for not following God, and the advantages for being obedient. (vs. 4)
- *It* _____ *its own lie*. It offers an alternative truth for life that we can be our own gods without negative repercussions.

IV. How Temptation Satisfies Us

- *It* _____ *satisfy* – It only gives momentary pleasure.
- *It leads to* _____ – painful emotional guilt. (vs. 7)
- *It forces a* _____ *from God* – (vs. 9)
- *It causes us to hide* _____ *sin or justify our actions* – We do this with ourselves, God, and others. (vs. 12)
- *It causes* _____ *consequences in our lives* – Not only are there consequences from the sin itself, but when we give in to temptation, it can become a habit. (vs. 23)

V. How Temptation Spreads

- *In our* _____ *lives* – One sin leads to another, breaking down our resistance to temptation and eventually leading to sin strongholds, and other types of sins.
- *It can* _____ *to others* – Our lives are examples, and influence others; either positively or negatively. (vs. 6)

Knowing how temptation works helps you to better resist it when it hits.

What temptations are you facing right now?

Answers: I. Desires; influence; tempts. II. Deceives; detours; disguises; desires. III. Questions; denies; substitutes. IV. Doesn't; shame; confrontation; our; negative. V. Own; spread.

Applying these truths to your life:

1. What temptations do you face in your life?
2. How do those temptations attract you? How do they deceive you?
3. How do these temptations lie to you?
4. What negative consequences have you faced when you gave in to temptation?