

Temptation Contingency Plans

All temptation is “common to man.” (1 Corinthians 10:13)

The main issue is not “Will I be tempted?” but, “What will my response be to that temptation?”

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert, ²where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry. Luke 4:1-2 (New International Version)

● THREE AREAS IN WHICH BELIEVERS ARE OFTEN TEMPTED.

- Satan tempts believers to doubt God’s provision and care.

The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread.”⁴ Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man does not live on bread alone.’” Luke 4:3-4 (NIV)

Jesus understood that this temptation wasn’t a temptation to be strong, but a temptation to be independent.

He will give you all you need from day to day if you make the Kingdom of God your primary concern. Luke 12:31 (New Living Translation)

- Satan tempts believers to doubt God’s plan.

The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. ⁶And he said to him, “I will give you all their authority and splendor, for it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. ⁷So if you worship me, it will all be yours.”⁸ Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.’” Luke 4:5-8 (NIV)

Brothers, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. ¹¹As you know, we consider blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job’s perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy. James 5:10-11 (NIV)

- Satan tempts believers to presume upon God.

The devil led him to Jerusalem and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. “If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down from here. ¹⁰For it is written: “ ‘He will command his angels concerning you to guard you carefully; ¹¹they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.’ ” ¹²Jesus answered, “It says: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’ ” ¹³When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time. Luke 4:9-13 (NIV)

When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time. Luke 4:13 (NIV)

. . . “Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God’s interests, but man’s.” Matthew 16:23 (New American Standard Bible)

An “opportune time” will happen when you are especially weak.

● STRATEGIES TO WIN OVER TEMPATION

- Strategy #1: Walk close to God. (Luke 4:1-2)

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan . . . Luke 4:1a (NIV)

Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. Ephesians 5:18 (NIV)

Being “filled” with the Spirit means being controlled by the Spirit.

- Strategy #2: Have a knowledge of Scripture and the commitment to obey it. (See Jesus’ example in Luke 4:3-12.)

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, . . . 2 Timothy 3:16 (NIV)

Two keys:

- Know Scripture in the area of temptation.
- Keep your “obedience switch” on.

- Strategy #3: Utilize on-the-spot prayer.

“Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak.” Matthew 26:41 (NIV)

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