

#5 How To Handle *Temptation*.

*No temptation has overtaken you
that is not common to man.*

God is faithful,

*and he will not let you be tempted
beyond your ability,*

but with the temptation he will also provide

the way of escape,

that you may be able to endure it.

1 Corinthians 10:13

THERE ARE ONLY **THREE** WAYS TO HANDLE *TEMPTATION*.

1. **YOU GIVE IN TO IT**: “What is natural and feels good then just do it.” Give caution to the wind, the animal in you says go with it.
2. **YOU FIGHT IT**: There are those who constantly battle but are constantly losing in the battle. They try to defeat temptation in the energy of the flesh.
3. **YOU OVERCOME IT THROUGH CHRIST**:

Notice: (1 Cor. 10:12-13) You don't have to be defeated by lust. *“Therefore, let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. (13) No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.”*

THE SOURCE OF *Temptation.*

• TEMPTATION will come through Three avenues.

1. THE WORLD.

2. THE DEVIL.

3. THE FLESH.

1. THE EXTERNAL FOE-THE "WORLD."

- Notice: (1Jn. 2:15) *"Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him."*
- Notice: (Rom. 12:2) *"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."*

The Second Seat of Temptation

The SOUL. Enemy World.

- **Your soul** is the “psychological part of you. It consists of your MIND, EMOTIONS, and WILL. It’s your sense of humor, intellect, temperament, taste, ego, and self.
- **Notice: (1 Pet. 2:11)** *“Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul.”*
- **So do you want to be a stranger to God, or a stranger in the world?**

You can't be both. **Notice: (James. 4:4)** *“Don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.”* This doesn't mean you shouldn't build friendships with people who don't know the Lord. But it does mean that Christians are not to make an alliance with sinful desires. It should feel strange to us to indulge in anything which God forbids. And if it doesn't feel strange, then we need to take a hard look at whether we truly have a relationship with God.

- **Notice: (Ephesians 5:3)** *“But immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints.”*
- **Remember**, God judges the **SOURCE** and **ORIGIN** of sin, not it’s manifestation or lack of manifestation!

Be **Who** You Already Are.

- Remember, Peter is urging these believers to abstain from the *“passions of the flesh.”* (1 Pet. 2:11)
- He warns them to do this because these passions are *warring against their souls*, hoping to destroy them.
- Peter just explained **who we are** as believers (**identity**), and then comes to **how we ought to live**. Because of **whom you already are**. Notice: (1 Pet. 2:9–11) *“But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God’s OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellences of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; (10) for you once were NOT A PEOPLE, but now you are THE PEOPLE OF GOD; you had NOT RECEIVED MERCY, but now you have RECEIVED MERCY. (11) Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul.”*
- Some will get this wrong by thinking these kinds of commands are not necessary for believers, because they’ve already been saved. Others will get this wrong by thinking we abstain so that we can be saved. **BOTH ARE SERIOUSLY WRONG.**

BE WHO YOU ALREADY ARE.

- The text tells us who we are, and then gives us the command (so that we increasingly become who we already are). Those who walk in love and crucify their flesh (not perfectly) **are showing they have already been made new through faith.**
- The same pattern shows up in (1 Cor. 5:6–7) ***“Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough? (7) Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new lump, just as you are in fact unleavened. For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed.”*** Be about becoming something new, because you already have been made new.
- You don’t become a good tree by bearing good fruit. You show that you are a good tree by bearing good fruit. **(Matt. 7:17–20)**
- When you abstain from the passions of the flesh, you’re not making yourself God’s chosen people, but revealing that you already are God’s chosen people.

HOW DO PASSIONS DESTROY YOU?

- How do your passions war against you and try to destroy you? **(1 Pet. 2:11)** Notice: that the **“SOUL”** of a man or woman is the place of godly thinking, living, and choosing. That is why fleshly passions wage war against it.
 1. The **ENEMY** is not your **SOUL**.
 2. The **ENEMY** is your **FLESH!**
 3. The **ENEMY** is not your **MIND**.
 4. The **ENEMY** is your **FLESH!**
- You exist (were made) to proclaim **“excellent things”** about God. **(1 Pet. 2:9)**
- **The passions of the flesh**: These are any passions that cause you to stop marveling most in the excellency of God They **DIM** and **DESTROY** your passions for God.
- They do this by making other things **look brighter** and **more beautiful** than God. **(1 Pet. 2:11)**
- The passions of the flesh strip you of the power to do the thing you were created to do: **“to proclaim God’s excellences.”**

WHAT CAUSES US TO SIN?

- **JAMES** identifies the fundamental cause, or source of our sin: it is our **“PASSIONS”** or **“DESIRES”** that wage war within our souls.
- **Notice: (James. 4:1-3)** *“What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? (2) You lust and do not have; so, you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so, you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. (3) You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures.”*
- **NOTICE WHAT JAMES DOES NOT SAY.**
 1. He doesn't say that the cause of our sinning is Satan.
 2. He doesn't say that you fight and engage in bitter conflict because Satan is at war within you.
 3. He doesn't say that the cause of our sinning is the world and its corrupt ways.
 4. He doesn't say that the cause of our sin is the dysfunctional family in which we were raised.
 5. The **CAUSE** of all our sinning are those **“PASSIONS”** or **“DESIRES”** that wage war within us.

MIND WARS!

➤ (2 Corinthians 10:3–5) *“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, (4) for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. (5) We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking Every Thought captive to the obedience of Christ,”*



- The Apostle Paul was in complete agreement with Peter on this point. Notice: (Col. 3:5) *“put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry”*
- Notice: (Mk. 7:21–23) *“For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, (22) deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness. (23) All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man.”*
- Both **PAUL** and **PETER** is based on their belief that the Christian is **ENERGIZED**, **ANIMATED**, and **EMPOWERED** by the **HOLY SPIRIT (Col. 1:29)**. **NO DESIRE OR PASSION OR URGE** is so entrenched in the human soul that a person indwelt by the Spirit cannot conquer it. But even if you can't conquer it or change it you can, with the Spirit's help, **CHOOSE** not to indulge in it.

- Many contend that you can't simply choose to suppress certain passions. In fact, they argue that it is psychologically dangerous to attempt any such thing. Venting our desires, giving them full and fetterless freedom, is the counsel we most often hear. "Be yourself! Embrace your longings!" And above all else, never judge or condemn someone for their expression or attempt to find fulfillment of these inward urges.
- When I look within myself, I see evil passions and selfish desires and uncleanness and covetousness, and I want nothing of them. These are ***VIOLATIONS*** of my true self. These are invasive enemies from which I long to be delivered by the grace of God. I have no desire to affirm all that is within me. I rather **CHOOSE** to defy much of what is within me. I choose by the grace of God to **OPPOSE IT, DEFEAT IT, and LIVE-IN TRUE FREEDOM FROM ITS ENSLAVING POWER.**

Winning The War For Your Soul.

- In (Eph. 4:22) Paul referred to this as **“DECEITFUL DESIRES.”**
- These *“passions”* or *“desires”* that Paul, Peter and James all mention will always **LIE TO YOU!!!!!!!**
- They will try to deceive you into believing that by indulging them and giving them sway in your life and by making room for them in your experience that you will find real and lasting joy. Don't believe them! They lie!
- They are “deceitful” desires. Fight them with reminders of truth. Fight them by laying hold of the truth found in (Psa. 16:11) ***“You will make known to me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.”***

The Third Seat of Temptation

The SPIRIT. Enemy Devil.

- There are a lot of believers who reason that the “Soul,” and “Spirit” are the same thing, but that’s bad theology. There is a difference!
- **Notice: (1Thess. 5:23)** *“Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*
- **Notice: (Heb. 4:12)** *“For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”*
- **What is The Spirit?** The spirit is much like the soul in that it is invisible. Spirit, and soul are “Indivisible,” but they are not identical. Remember I've shared with you that man is created in the image of God, therefore we've been given something that no other creature has, a **“SPIRIT,”**
- **Notice: (Jn.4:24)** *“God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”* At the moment of “conversion” something wonderful happens.

Benefits From Being SAVED.

- **Notice:** (Col. 2:13) *“When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions,”*
- **Notice:** (1 Pet. 3:18) *“For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit;”*
- **The “PROOF” Of Your CONVERSION:** **Notice:** (Rom. 8:16) *“The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God,”*
- **The spirit is therefore,** that part of your nature that can,
 1. You can **“KNOW”** God.
 2. You can **“FELLOWSHIP”** with God.
 3. You can **“COMMUNE”** with God.

Understanding **BODY, SOUL,** and **SPIRIT.**

• What Do I **NEED TO KNOW?**

1. With your **“BODY”** you have **“PHYSICAL”** life, and you know the world beneath you.
2. With your **“SOUL”** you have **“PSYCHOLOGICAL”** life, and you know the world around you, and within you.
3. With your **“SPIRIT”** you have **“SPIRITUAL”** life, and you know the world above you.
 - When your **“BODY”** is right, then your **“HEALTHY.”**
 - When your **“SOUL”** is right, then your **“HAPPY.”**
 - When your **“SPIRIT”** is right, then your **“HOLY.”**
 - This was the original intent of creation. This is what made Adam whole!
 - Remember: The World is **“OUT OF WHACK,”** because of **“SIN.”** When the devil comes to tempt, he attacks the **body, soul, or spirit.**

How Do believers “RESIST” The Devil?

- **Notice: (James. 4:7)** *“Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”*
- Peter commands Christians to have a mind that is resolute and to **RESIST** Satan by being **FIRM IN** their **FAITH**.
- **“RESIST” means:** *“TO TAKE A STAND AGAINST,”* and to be **“FIRM”** is to make that stand solid (the Greek is *stereos*, from which comes the English *stereo*, meaning **“solid,”** or **balanced at both ends**). That is done by being solidly fixed on *the faith (te pistei)*, which is biblical revelation. It is the **whole body of revealed truth contained in Scripture**.
- This is a call to **KNOW** and **BELIEVE SOUND DOCTRINE**, to be discerning in distinguishing truth from error, and to be willing to defend the truth and expose error.
- **Jude’s call is most appropriate in this connection:** Notice: (Jude. 3) *“Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints”* It is that **“ONCE-FOR-ALL”** faith which is the inscripturated revelation of God and constitutes the **FAITH** on which believers **STAND SOLIDLY** and from which they continually resist Satan.

- This **“STRONG STAND”** is the result of the faithful leading of shepherds in the church, as Paul indicates in: **(Eph. 4:11–14) Notice: *“And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. 14 As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming;”***
- **Understand, SATAN IS A LIAR** (John 8:44; cf. Gen. 3:1; 2 Thess. 2:9) and a **DECEIVER** (Rev. 20:7–8), the only sure way to stand up against him is by faithful obedience to biblical truth. The battle is a spiritual one, in the supernatural realm, as Paul notes in:

- Notice: (2 Cor. 10:3–5) *“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.”*
- “SPECULATIONS” are satanic **ideologies, ideas, theories, religious philosophies,** and **systems of thought** *“raised up against the knowledge of God”*; that is, they are **ANTI-BIBLICAL** viewpoints that have people captive as if they were imprisoned in a great fortress. Christians cannot smash those ideas with human ingenuity, but only with biblical truth—*“taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.”* Only when someone has the mind of Christ on a matter is he rescued from such ideas.

How Do You “Test” The Spirit’s?

- **JOHN understands** how important it is to realize that you can't believe everything you hear, you can't believe everything that is purported to come from God, you can't believe everything that is supposedly biblical. Cannot believe all teachers of religion, you cannot believe all Christian preachers, or Christian evangelists or teachers. You cannot believe all who came...who claim to speak for God and claim to have a prophetic voice that is set loose in the world.
- **Notice: (1 Jn. 4:1-6)** *“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. 2 By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; 3 and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world. 4 You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world. 5 They are from the world; therefore, they speak as from the world, and the world listens to them. 6 We are from God; he who knows God listens to us; he who is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.”*

- **There is the SPIRIT OF TRUTH**, the Holy Spirit, and there is the spirit of error who would be Satan and his demons. Nothing is benign. All spiritual truth either comes from a divine source or a demonic source. And we know that God speaks truth and reveals truth and Satan speaks a lie and is a deceiver and so it is critical that we be able to discern the difference. God's truth must be guarded very, very carefully. It is always under attack. It is relentlessly under attack.
- **This is why the APOSTLE PAUL instructed TIMOTHY at the end of his first letter to him, Notice: (1 Tim. 6 :20) *“O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you, avoiding worldly and empty chatter and the opposing arguments of what is falsely called “knowledge”—***
- **Here’s how PAUL began his second letter to TIMOTHY. Notice: (2 Tim. 1:13-15) *“Retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. 14 Guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to you. 15 You are aware of the fact that all who are in Asia turned away from me, among whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes.”* Paul is saying to Timothy, **“DON'T BE LIKE THEM, DON'T ABANDON THE TRUTH, DON'T ABANDON ME THE TRUE APOSTLE.”****

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- **IT'S THE *GUARDIANSHIP* THAT IS SO IMPORTANT.** There are always false religionists, cultists. There are always those who come along with their deceptive schemes that purport to be biblical, that quote Bible verses, that say they have a message from God, that have a better way to understand the Bible and apply the Bible to make the Bible acceptable, to make the gospel acceptable. There are those who in outright fashion attack the Bible and then there are those who are much more subtle than that. But we are constantly being called to the defense of the Scripture and the defense of the truth.