

Victorious Christian Life 4 Temptation, Trials, and Sin

a study for **Gulf Coast Baptist Church** Wednesday night Discipleship Groups

Introduction

Many believers struggle with guilt. Having an understanding of the damage that sin can do, without becoming paralyzed by guilt can be difficult. God has a plan for believers and sin can be a hindrance to finding and performing God's desirous will. But many believers do not understand the difference between temptation and sin. Temptation is a solicitation to do evil. It always comes from one of the three spiritual enemies and never from God. There is also a difference between a trial and temptation. The book of James takes us through the origin of a sin. One of our spiritual enemies - the Flesh, Satan (usually through one of his minions), and the World System - will all try to draw the believer away and entice him with something that is not in God's desirous will. When the believer gives in to this enticement, he has sinned. When a believer sins, there are specific actions that the Scriptures teach about how to restore fellowship.

Temptations vs Trials

Temptations are solicitations to do evil (1 Cor 10:13, Luke 4:2). There are no temptations that are not common to all men. James tells us that God is not tempted nor will He ever tempt anyone to do evil (James 1:13). God will test His children. These tests are intended to teach the believer something about God or himself. These trials will reveal motives, or what the believer is trusting in at that moment. God will confirm the believer's faith, or correct it.

Trials are composed of 4 things:

- a Test (Gen 22:2, James 2:21-24),
- a Response (Heb 11:17-19),
- a Proof (Heb 11:19), and
- a Result (James 2:24-25).

Trials are defined as afflictions that the believer suffers for the purpose of testing (James 1:2-3, 1 Peter 1:6-7, 1 Peter 4:12).

Temptation turns into sin when the believer makes a determination to act and his will combines with whatever lust the spiritual enemy placed in his mind (James 1:14-15). Being drawn away is not sin, that is temptation. But when the believer gives in to the enticement, then sin has been conceived. Christ understands any temptation or trial that we may go through (Heb 2:18, 4:15).

Lusts in the mind

Lust is unique from a trial or a temptation. **Επιθυμει**. There are good and bad lusts

- Good lusts
 - To be a pastor 1 Tim 3:1
 - To eat Luke 15:16, 16:21, 22:15
 - Angel's posses good lust 1 Peter 1:12
 - To grow Heb. 6:11
 - To see things others saw Matt 13:17

- To see and be with Christians 1 Thess 2:17
- There are bad lusts
 - From Satan John 8:44
 - From the World System 1 John 2:15-17
 - From the Sin nature (flesh) Gal. 5:24
- Bad lusts have certain characteristics.
 - They war against the soul 1 Peter 2:11
 - They give a false impression Eph 4:21-22, Heb 3:13
 - They can lead to passions Gal. 5:24
 - They can lead to uncleanness Rom 1:24
 - They prevent one from doing the will of God. 1 Pet 4:2-3
- The Bible tells us how to deal with them
 - Do not fulfill them (bring to completion) Rom 13:14
 - Say no, by grace Tit 2:12
 - Walk by the Spirit so as not to complete them Gal 5:16
 - Do not allow your sin nature to reign Rom 6:12

Sin - Defined, Its Origin, and Who is Repsonsible

Sin can be defined as “missing the mark” (1 John 3:4). It is used interchangeably with “lawlessness”. It is living as though God has placed no restraints on our lives. Sin originated with Satan. Isaiah 14:12-14 walks us through this process. Satan made a determination “in his heart” - *certify, to avouch as true Heb. amar*

Sin was brought into the world through Adam (Romans 5:12,19) Sin was personal - RW Sin came from outside the world of humanity -RWP. As we have seen, sin is an act (James 1:15). Our lust (strong desire – not wrong) is acted upon by the enemies. It is dragged away or enticed. A thought will enter unbidden into the believer’s mind. It could come from memory, imagination, or seemingly out of nowhere. There is always a way of escape – (1 Corinthians 10:13). If a determination or choice to sin comes then the believer has sinned. The spiritual enemies will present an opportunity (Josh 7:21). God often intervenes to limit the consequences to protect a believer’s ministry. He can keep the believer who has determined to sin from an opportunity to sin. Sin results when the will connects with the lust and some action results. This action can be a determination or a physical action. For instance, the choice not to act when led by the Holy Spirit can be a sin.

There are different words for unrighteousness in the Bible. This study is not intended to define each one of them. But a trespass is described in Gal 6:1 as a fault. A trespass is an attitude that is offensive to God.

What to do next

John 1:9 tells the believer what he must do when he sins. Confession is the act of agreeing with God that a certain act is sin. The believer does not need to ask for forgiveness, this

is his based on initial salvation (Eph 1:7, Col 1:14, Acts 26:18). Understanding that forgiveness is a possession of a believer creates a sense of gratitude when the believer is overcome by temptation. Agreeing with God that sin has occurred, and that forgiveness is there, allows the believer to be restored to communion and fellowship with the Spirit.

Conclusion

The Spiritual Enemies will seek to provoke the believer to sin by using various methods. It is wise for the believer to understand each enemy and how they might be tempted to sin from each of them. God gives specific methods of defense against each enemy. Sin will rob the believer of fellowship, growth, and reward. The believer should understand the tragic consequences of sin and live a life of fellowship with God.