

The ReBorn Identity Part 7: Overcoming Temptation

We have been in a series called “**The ReBorn Identity**”

Today, I want to look at **Temptation** in the life of the believer.

Before we can see how to deal with temptation, we have to remember who we really are

-What is your identity?

-Since having been placed in the Christ who are you?

When you answer that question it will connect the dots on everything.

There has been a new life deposited inside of you and it is Christ Jesus Himself coming to live inside of you.

-God’s new address is you.

Colossians says you have been **“translated”**-- which means **“to pick something up physically and take it over and put it down somewhere else.”**

What you have been translated out of is the domain of darkness and into the kingdom of Light.

Since all of humanity was born into the wrong family—the first Adam’s family,

We needed a second Man to restart the human race,

-A Last Adam who can set right what the first Adam brought to destruction

This Last Adam can then take mankind to the intimacy with God that he had been created to enjoy.

Just as Adam was an individual but also literally contained all of humankind within him,

-Jesus contains the New Creation in Himself

-He is the New Man

-Jesus is the Last Adam who restarts a different kind of race—the New Creation

Jesus started this human race all over again.

-There is a new mankind

-It is as new as if God took a bunch of dust and started creation all over again.

All of humanity is part of one of two races:

-You are either **“in Adam”** with his sin nature and family resemblance

-Or you are **“in Christ”** with His nature being **conformed into His image** and likeness

When you became a Christian you changed races.

-You left the Adam race and you joined the Last Adam race.

-You changed from one mankind into the other mankind.

You have the **old mankind** which sprang out of Adam and inherited this genetic virus called the sin nature

-and you have a **new mankind** that spring out of the last Adam who is Jesus.

-You were re-gene-erated, you received a new spiritual DNA after Jesus and got His perfect nature

When I speak of the old man and the new man,

-I don't look down inside of me.

Maybe you've heard that there is an old man and a new man inside you.

-If that's true, then to become a believer is to become schizophrenic,

-to become a two headed monster.

There are **not** two people living inside of you.

-This is who you truly are.

This is who you are, this isn't who you would like to be.

-You may not understand all of it, you will.

-This is who you are

(ILL) a little baby doesn't understand what it means to be fully human,
-it's okay you will
-the baby is still fully human even though she may not understand all that means

“But it feels like there are two people inside of me.”

The Bible talks about a part of your life called **“the flesh.”**

**For Paul, the “flesh” primarily is describing every part of you—desire, emotion, thought, action—
-everything that is not under the control/influence of the Holy Spirit.**

Your new nature was put into the same body that was used to living apart from God.

-The Bible calls this your **“flesh.”**

Your flesh has old habits, ways of thinking, ways of responding, that have to be retrained, renewed, put off

Your new nature has no desire to sin;

-But that doesn't mean that your body, soul, emotions, habits are totally renewed.

-That depends on the renewing of your mind.

The reason you now feel a desire or drawing toward sin is *not* because your old sin nature compels you to sin;

-But you still feel the effects of your old man where your mind is not renewed.

These affects of the unrenewed mind are what Paul calls your **flesh.**

“Temptation” is the strong call to return to the ways of my life before Christ

-It is an appeal to my flesh, to my humanity, to my physical appetites,
-to my natural reactions of my emotions and thinking.

James 1:14, 15

14But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. 15Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

James talks about “**desires**” which are our natural human desires that are strongly drawn toward something in the world.

-James tells us this is not sin

It is only sin when the desire conceives by moving from a reaction to a decision

-to deliberately pursue what is calling

Temptation starts a long time before it starts.

Do you remember Lot, the nephew of Abraham?

-He ended up living in the wicked city of Sodom

Do you remember how it started?

It says “**he pitched his tent toward Sodom.**”

Every day he got up that morning and said, “**that doesn't look like such a bad place to live. I know a lot of bad stuff goes on in there, but it looks like a good place.**”

-So he started moving closer and closer to Sodom until he moved in.

-That's how it always starts.

Do not wait until the temptation is at full strength, but at the first thought, the first suggestive whisper,

-be present to the Spirit of God within you.

Realize that Jesus is in you and you are hidden with Christ in God

-Remember who you are

-This is a call back to something that isn't true

This will set you free: it is not a sin to be tempted.

Hebrews 4:15

15For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

Jesus felt all the temptations that we face.

-But in that He did not sin.

(ILL) Someone says something to you that is unkind or unfair, or just plain evil.

-It is not sin to experience the negative emotional reaction of being hurt

-Or to have feelings or anger or revenge.

-To have that feeling of **“Oh no you didn’t!”**

But if you begin to pitch a tent there,

-rehearse the offense

-tell others

-that desire has conceived and you are in sin.

(ILL) You are stuck in traffic

-You can’t get that old fart out of the left lane; Road rage is an emotion that I must deal with.

-Somebody near you is being extra loud and happy during worship

-It is not sinning to have feeling or being irritated or impatient.

(ILL) I had a person a while back who used to send me an email with everything that was wrong with my sermons

-It would have been different if they actually listened to what I was saying

-It would be different if they weren’t being so **ignorant** and **arrogant** at the same time, they were being **ignarrogant**

It wasn’t sin for me to have the **spirit of slap** come on me as a reaction

-I felt offended

(ILL) If you had addiction in your body with alcohol or drugs before coming to Christ

-it would not be unusual for the body to have flashbacks and send messages to the brain requesting relief as it used to know it.

We did not receive a resurrected body when Christ comes to live within us

-and we still have all the normal physical appetites common to every human being

None of this is sin.

-Many believers wear a mask and pretend they do not even have temptation in their life.

-They are usually hiding the biggest problems.

Luke 3

²¹Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened, ²²and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."

Don't you want the Blu-ray video of that in 3-D?

"You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."

¹ And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness ²for forty days, being tempted by the devil.

The Holy Spirit led him into conflict.

-Why would the Holy Spirit lead Jesus into the desert to be tempted?

(ILL) Mousetrap video <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VcSBO8YAnTQ>

Here is one of the main points I want to bring out: **Temptation is the gymnasium in which we acquire spiritual strength**

-Temptation is God's chosen method to reveal Christ, again and again, in our lives.

(ILL) If someone gave you a super suit that was protected you from any harm, *how would you know it worked unless you tested it?*

-When someone pointed a gun at you and the bullet bounced off your chest, you have a new level of knowledge of what you possess.

When a missile hit you in the back and had no effect, you will have a new confidence in that suit

You will have just revealed what was true all along.

The only time God will lead you into a conflict is when He has already prepared you to win.

-The only time He leads you into a storm is because He has already given you the grace to bring an end to the storm.

Conflicts are never allowed to humiliate, discourage, or to distract.

-They are only permitted when you have been equipped to win.

What is Jesus' first temptation?

And he ate nothing during those days. And when they were ended, he was hungry.

I like Darius' fast—He fasted all night.

³The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread." ⁴And Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone.'"

What was the first temptation?

-It was *not* to turn stones into bread,

-it was the question who he was.

-The first temptation was to try to get Him to question His identity.

Verse 3 said **"if you are the son of God"**

What did Jesus just hear in Luke 3:23? You are my beloved son in you I am well pleased.

What was His first temptation? If you are the son of God.

The reason the Holy Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted was Jesus couldn't go and be all that He was in the Gospels until he had been tempted

-God wanted Him to know with conviction His identity as a Son

God doesn't tempt people, but He is in charge of it.

-God wants **you to know with conviction your identity in Christ.**

It says that in the book of **Judges** that God deliberately left a lot of the uglies in the land of Canaan

-so that the people who hadn't seen what God can do would know it by experience

Sometimes I feel like saying **“God I already read the history books. I don't need this experience for myself.”**

God says **“You need it. You need to face the enemy and discover My power”**

-Temptation is not a negative, temptation is a wonderful positive

There is a plan and a purpose behind temptation

-you are going to grow in temptation

-you are going to become who we are supposed to be in temptation

When temptation comes, you can shake its hand and say **“Hello temptation, you may not realize this, but you have come to make me stronger in God. When I'm finished with you, I'm going to be stronger than I ever have been before”**

You will turn that mousetrap into an exercise machine.

“Temptation” is the same word for **“trial”** in the original Greek language.

-It simply means **“to discover what is in a person”**

(ILL) When they make some parts of airplanes at a certain point they put the big part of that airplane into a pressure tunnel and they put the pressure on it to see if it would buckle under the pressure.

-If it did buckle, nobody gets upset, they just knew that they needed to adjust this a little bit more.

- Because they had to **test** it, **try** it **tempted** it to see what was in it.

What happens in temptation?

It is a call to my flesh, this part of me that would like to act as if it is independent of God and all by itself in charge.

-Temptation calls us to be who we are not.

Temptation is a call to act as if Jesus never truly took up residence,

-That means temptation is calling me to un-reality.

-It isn't real.

-I'm being called to act in a way that isn't real.

I am being called to find meaning where I already know there isn't any.

-I am being called to dance with the grand illusion.

-It isn't there

(ILL) I had snakes as pets and they would shed.

-One of the snakes was shedding its skin.

The snake found a sharp surface and began to scratch where it itched

-and he got rid of what was no longer a part of him.

It had been him last year, but now it was just an annoying itch.

Temptation is the itch that God allows in our life so that we can choose to be who we are, the new creation in Christ.

So, temptation comes with a two-pronged attack:

- 1) **“go ahead, do it, yes, yes, yes, this belongs to you,”**—seeking meaning in life apart from God
- 2) You tell yourself, **“I mustn't do this, I won't do this”**

The surest way to be defeated in any area of strong temptation is to feel shame for having the tempting thoughts (not realize it is not a sin to be tempted

-And then to fight the temptation and try not to have those thoughts.

Trying to fight temptation is the worst thing you can do.

Some of you are shocked right now.

-Some of you are tempted to call me a heretic right now.

-You are not in sin...yet.

When you try to not have those tempting thoughts you will inevitably fail

-and then get plunged deeper and deeper into guilt, despair and shame.

You do not resist temptation with will power

-You resist and overcome temptation by turning to Christ, your true life within

If the call is to **worry**,
-He is your **peace**

If the call is to **impatience**,
-He is your **patience**.

If the call is to **hatred and bitterness**,
-He is your **love and forgiveness**.

You are tempted with **Krispy Kreme** donuts
-You are on your own.

No...Jesus is your source of **meaning and fulfillment** in life
-Not your sweet tooth and stomach

The more clearly you know Jesus and have a friendship with Him
-the more you know the Resource that is available to you

That is why intimacy with Jesus is the foundation for every victory in your life

Temptation is not overcome by willpower
-Even if you are strong enough to say “no” to temptation, you have still failed the test.

God did not allow the temptation to show the world the strength of your willpower
-the temptation is a means to let Christ live mightily through you.

The believer never says, “no” to temptation
-The believer says “yes” to Jesus.

To fight against the temptation is to fight a shadow or an illusion
-We turn to Christ, our life

Temptation is the opportunity for the Spirit to produce the life of Christ in your life.

You will never know the **fullness of the love of God** until you are around some people that are humanly impossible to love

-You know, the ones with OPD—Obnoxious Personality Disorder

You discover the **peace of God** that passes human comprehension when you are in a situation where human flesh would be in a state of nail-biting anxiety.

The **joy of the Lord** is best experienced in our circumstances that would naturally plunge us into despair.

Paul had to learn that lesson that the power of God is best seen in our weakness

-“...when I am weak, then I am strong (2 Cor. 12:10).

If there were no temptation and trial, there would be no need for the life of Christ to manifest in us.

In order to **raise someone from the dead**, someone has to die first.

-The resurrection power of Jesus can only be seen in a dead body.

We should not view temptation as an enemy but as the opportunity to **“put on”** the life of Christ

That is why James says, **“Consider it pure joy whenever you face trials of many kinds (James 1:2).**

Never say “no” to temptation

-says yes to Jesus.

When you say “no”, you are drawing on your willpower, concentrating all the energy of your flesh to refuse the temptation.

-You are mustering up all of your human ability to do something to please god.

-But that isn't the way the Christian life is lived.

Stop trying to _____ (fill in the blank)

-stop gossiping

-stop being critical of other

- stop lying
- stop lusting
- stop abusing drugs or alcohol

And let Christ by the Spirit live through you.

**When temptation knocks at your door,
-do not try to answer it and tell it to go away
-Send Jesus to answer the door.**

Life is never a matter of trying to be good,
-but admitting you can never be good.

Christianity is not a matter of adjusting your behavior or rededicating your efforts to God to do better,
-but, rather, letting Christ live through you in His strength and power.

Faith is not collecting all of your willpower into a mighty **“No!”**
-...it is a recognition at the point of your weakness that, even though you may not feel it...
-Christ is your strength.

Let's say you are wrestling with an **addiction to drugs or gossiping.**
-You are at a friend's house and suddenly there are drugs right under your nose.

Or, you get a phone call and your friend says, **“You are not going to believe what I heard about Pastor Charlie ...”**

You are not going to try and muster up a **“no.”**
-You are going to say **“Yes”** to Jesus

There is a voice inside of you—the Spirit—that will say, **“This desire for drugs is not the real you.**
-This desire to hear this gossip is not the real you.

That person who wants that died with Christ and I am now risen with Him and He is my life.
-And I am trying to deal with this as if He was not inside of me.
Lord Jesus, I don't want to get high.

-Lord Jesus, I don't want to gossip.

I am weak. You take over and live Your victory through me.”

Realize that you are a branch in the vine and His life is there for you.

-In that moment, you will become who you really are in Christ.

More of that skin will shed

-Your mousetrap will become a bench press

And you will find that you will not just stop gossiping

-You will have a passion to encourage people with your words

-You will impart grace to people when you talk to them

Instead of addicted to drugs,

-You will find freedom in every other area of your life and you will never have the desire to drugs again.

You didn't just die to sin,

-You were raised to a newness of life—the very life of God in you

One last thing, suppose you fall.

-Let's say you say “yes” to temptation. *What happens then?*

Know that God still loves you.

-Know God does not stop loving you for one nanosecond.

-That even when you leap into sin you've leapt into the arms of God who loves you.

Many believers they think that now they are going to have to do penance for this next six months

-and when you feel horrible enough God will forgive you.

If you fall into sin you confess your sin.

*What does **confess** mean?* It means to say the same thing as.

-It means you agree with what God says about your sin.

Don't justify yourself and don't blame shift and say **"if it wasn't for this woman you gave me.”** -The problem is you said “yes” to sin.

Your problem is that you were deceived into forgetting who you really are—
-someone who is dearly loved
-and has Christ living inside of them Who can overcome and win in any situation

When you confess your sin, the Bible says that **the blood of Jesus cleanses your sin.**

So I say the same thing about sin that God says.

- Yes, it is sin BUT the blood of Jesus cleanses you from all sin.
- And you receive that gift of forgiveness

Even when you fall flat on your face in the mud and you are blowing bubbles in the mud,

- you can say **“He still loves me.”**

That your foundation. That is how you can continue on.

- That is your first rung on the ladder out.

What happens if you keep on falling in one area?

- Then seek out a person of God and spill your heart to them.
- The Bible says **“confess your faults one to another, that you may be healed”**

Make sure it is not the town gossip.

There are times when you need to talk to someone who is Jesus with skin on.

- And hear them say, **“The God who loves you with an everlasting love, who sent His Son do pay for this, I declare to you that you are free. Your sins are forgiven.**

Col. 1:9-14 (become who you are)

asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, ¹⁰so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. ¹¹ May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy, ¹² giving thanks to the Father, who

**has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.
¹³He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred
us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴in whom we have
redemption, the forgiveness of sins.**