

Temptation

One thing common to all of us is temptation. It is an enduring fact of human experience. This being true, we need to prepare ourselves to face temptation so that we may overcome it. A greater understanding of temptation can help us in our battle against it; so here are some insights on the subject that will help.

As long as we live on this earth, we will be tempted. You will never get to a place in your Christian life where you are no longer tempted. A person cannot advance so far in grace that he or she is above temptation. Yes, we may not be tempted with some things as we used to be, but temptation itself will remain in some form or another. As long as we remain within the confines of this physical, earthly body, temptation will be a reality. Jesus Christ Himself was tempted, and so will we (see Matthew 4:1-11).

Temptation is not sin. If it is, then Jesus sinned, for He was tempted in the wilderness by Satan. Yet, Hebrews 4:15 says that Jesus “was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.” This is where Satan hits some people hard. He deceives them into thinking that temptation itself is actually sinful. So they say, “What’s the use? I might as well give in, for I’ve already sinned anyway.” This is a trick. You have not sinned until your will consents to the temptation; temptation itself is not sin.

God will never allow us to be tempted beyond what we are able to bear. 1 Corinthians 10:13 says, “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.” God sets the perimeters on our temptation, determining how far it may go. No matter how fierce the temptation, it can be overcome if we choose God’s “way of escape.” So the question is not “can we” but “will we.” The choice is ours.