

OVERCOMING TEMPTATION

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“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; for God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”

I Corinthians 10:13

The tragedy of Christian downfall is much affected by the influences of temptation, that is everywhere around us. We were born sinners and it seems often to be easier to disobey God than to follow His Word to victory. Yet, the believer can avoid it and experience the joy of walking so closely to God you can refuse its enticements. Please read carefully and see how you can avoid temptation. **First Be On Guard:** *“Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall”* I Cor. 10:12. Notice the clear warning. When you are not on guard in a careless moment, thinking all is well, beware. If you think you are above temptation you will fall into it. Diligence will go a long way to keep you walking straight. Then **Resist It:** Having established the source of the danger, and knowing that Satan is the author of it, take a stand against it. Notice James 4:7 says, *“Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.* Never in our own strength are we able to gain victory, over the character ruining temptations around us. Take a stand against them! **Flee Them:** When Joseph was invited by a lustful women for sin, he fled, leaving his coat behind. Paul wrote in II Tim. 2:22 *“Flee youthful lusts”*. That is great advice not only to tempted teens but to all believers. Leave the party, break the date, control your surroundings. How foolish to shrug your shoulders and say, that's the way the ball bounces. Turn off the TV program, or the radio. Leave the group, get out of the car

and avoid situations where you are tempted. God promises in our text to make a way of escape. Look for the exit from anything and anyone who is apt to pull you down. You don't have to fall and grieve the Spirit, that is within you. However, if you do slip **Confess The Sin:** I John 1:9 shouts the precious truth *“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”* Don't blame your failure on others, or the trying times, or say you couldn't help it. Look to the Lord who knows about your weakness and ask for forgiveness without delay. When on a work job that leaves you dirty, you need to clean up before you sit down at the table. Don't allow the stains of temptation defeats to hang around and pollute you. Then be sure you trust God and understand the strength of His offered promises. Be sure to lean on your **Trust in God:** Always remember, *“He is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy”* Jude 24. It is so very sad to hear folks say they cannot avoid the evils of today. No matter what your circumstances are, you can live above the swamp of temptation around us. My life verse is Phil. 4:13 which promises *“I can do all things through Christ which strengthen me.”* I have lived by this verse through 82 years and found there is always victory to those who lean upon the Lord. Remember the beautiful song, “He is able to deliver thee.” Whatever it is that tries to defeat you is powerless before the might of God. Lean on His might, trust in His power, and refuse all that tears you down and tempts you to do evil. Here are some practical tips backed up by God in His wonderful Word **Enlist Christ's Help:** *“My little children, these things I write unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous”* I John 2:1. We are in the world, but do not have to be of it. We can live above its putrefying

atmosphere if we try. Another good hint is to **Substitute Good:** The believer does not have to participate in the evil around us. You can turn off undesirable TV programming and radio music and substitute good things for the evil. Don't you have some good Christian CDs to replace the racket which engulfs you? Sure you do. It is always good to substitute evil things that hurt you with spiritual things that will help you. Listen to Christian broadcasting and view and read that which glorifies God. *"Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."* Phil. 4:8. Good thoughts, will flush bad thoughts from your daily life and build a shield against temptation. Another important consideration is to have **Caution With Friends.** The Psalmist said *"I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts"* Psalm 119:63. Exodus 23:2 urges *"thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil."* II Cor. 6:14 admonishes *"Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness?"* These verses do not mean we must live like a hermit but rather choose carefully with whom you associate. This is vital to school years and dating and marriage and work and all fellowship with others. Remember, "You can't run with a skunk and smell like a rose." Not only are we to make a good impression on others but remember they are making one on us. Many Christian teens have lost their standards on a date with an unsaved friend. Many a marriage is doomed for failure because of the lack of oneness in Christ. Again we should not isolate ourselves but insulate ourselves in the commands of our Lord. It is good also to **Control Circumstances.** Remember the cute little song you sang in your

childhood? "Remember what you do for the Lord is watching you." It urged us as kids to control our eyes, ears, hands, and feet, as we are always under the gaze of the Lord. *"No man that warreth, (cares) entangeleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please Him who hath chosen him to be a soldier."* If you really love the Lord then do not place yourself in situations that will tempt you and diminish your testimony. One further point would be to **Keep Busy For God.** *"Be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord"* I Cor. 15:58. A busy Christian has little time to be caught up in the sinful things of this world. There are four things that will fill your days with value. First, **Faithful Prayer.** Time spent in personal and family prayer, along with prayer meeting' will help you and others to walk the straight path. I Thess 5:17 urges, *Pray without ceasing."* There is no substitute for time spent talking with the Lord. Add to that **Daily Bible Study.** Bathe your day in the Word of God and it will be easier to avoid evil and walk with God. Be sure the members of your family take time to meditate on the great strength of the Bible. This takes constant vigilance for worldly pursuits constantly flood our daily lives. Be very zealous about taking time for God. Take time to memorize scripture. Psalm 119:11 pictures a victorious believer who can say *"Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee."* Verses memorized will pop up when Satan beckons you into an alley of defeat. And lastly, **Faithful Service.** *"Fight the good fight of faith hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses."* As long as the devil roams this world of sin there will be temptation around us. We can defeat the enemy by careful and prayerful obedience to the Word of God. So come on believer, leave the world alone and concentrate on the battle for the right. Praise God!