

Study #2 Temptation

2) Temptation. Have you heard that old phrase “the devil made me do it”? While the devil cannot make us do anything, he will do all he can to tempt us to sin, so we exercise our choice in that direction. So what does the Bible say about temptation? Lets find out...

James 1:14-15 describes temptation as being drawn or carried away from right to wrong thoughts and actions by our own desires for wrong. When that desire takes hold of us, like a prisoner, it produces/results in sin, which results in death.

Romans 7:18-24. Paul presents a truth that pertains to every person, except Christ. Due to our fallen nature we have no power over sin. We cannot resist it in our own strength even if/when we want to. But we can find hope and victory over sin by choosing the strength, grace, and mercy of Jesus Christ!

1 Peter 5:8. While our fallen nature is a big issue, don't forget who caused it. Satan/the Devil/the Dragon, once the covering cherub Lucifer before his fall, is creation's enemy Our destruction is His goal.

James 1:13,14. While God may allow trials, He does not tempt anyone to do evil, to sin. That is the result of our choice – choosing self over God.

James 1:2-4. God allow us to face trials to refine our faith, to develop and strengthen the character we should have, and to help us see our dependence on Him and choose to abide with/in Him. Knowing that God is preparing us to be fit to live with Him for eternity should cause rejoicing, not sorrow.

Matthew 4:1,11. Being tempted itself is not a sin! Jesus faced the greatest temptations, greater than anyone ever has or will face, and in the worst of circumstances, while He was at His physical, and probably emotional and spiritual, weakest. Yet He overcame by choosing the strength and grace His Father provided.

1 Timothy 6:12. Because Jesus overcame Satan, temptation, and sin, He can give us His victory, His strength, His grace. That's why the battle is one of faith - we must continually place and keep our faith in Jesus, so we too can receive His victory and have eternal life!

Ephesians 6:12-18. Our battle is with Satan and the other fallen angels who followed him, not people. We need to be prepared for this spiritual battle by wearing the full “spiritual armor”: Surround yourself with truth, not error, fiction, or fantasy. Let your heart rest and abide in Christ's righteousness. Actively share your testimony and the eternal gospel of peace with everyone God gives you opportunity to. Exercise your faith to protect yourself from Satan's onslaught and the trials of life. Fill your mind with the Bible truths pertaining to salvation, as well as all its truth and counsel. Be faithful and diligent in prayer, inspired/motivated by the Holy Spirit.

James 4:7. Surrender your heart and life to God and Jesus Christ can/will give you His victory, His power, to resist Satan and temptation.

Colossians 4:2. The need for prayer - including thankfulness, the need for communion with God, cannot be stressed enough. It is your "powerline", little prayer = little power, much prayer = much power!

Matthew 26:41. Jesus reminded His followers of the importance of prayer, due of our fallen nature.

John 15:4,5. If we stay connected and surrendered to Jesus through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, we will bear fruit (Galatians 5:22-23), Christ's will develop His character in us.

John 5:39. People read the Bible for multitudes of reasons, some wrong. Please don't forget that the primary purpose of Scripture - both Old & New Testament - is to teach us about, and point us to Jesus Christ!

1 Corinthians 10:13. Take comfort that when you are tempted you are not alone. Others have faced similar temptations, and Jesus has faced and conquered every species of temptation and sin at a level we will never face. Take hope that when you are tempted, God will never let you be tempted beyond the faith, and power He has given you. You can find escape and victory by trusting in Jesus!

1 John 1:9. When growing, we sometimes slip, tumble, and fall. We don't do it deliberately, but it can happen as we grow. If you slip up under temptation, don't give up! Take it and a repentant heart to God, confess the sin, accept His forgiveness, and resolve not to do it again. Please notice two things happen here: 1) the repentant sinner receives God's forgiveness (so forgive yourself too). God also cleans us from sin. He continues to change our character so we despise sin and overcome it.

Proverbs 28:13. It is because of sin, all/any sin, that Jesus died. Don't make light of your sins. Don't try to excuse them away or say they don't matter. Instead, confess them to God, and forsake them in the strength and grace He gives - experience His mercy!

Philippians 4:13. Remember that by abiding in Christ, you can do all that He asks because He will also provide you the needed strength, faith, and grace. To God be the glory!