STARTING OUT AS A CHRISTIAN · STUDY NOTES

Study 10: Resisting temptation

For personal study or groups

Your name

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How to use these notes. Watch each part's video on biblehelp.net, or read the text below. Look up each passage in your own Bible and write the answer on the lines. The verses are printed at the back if you need them. At the end there are questions to think about on your own or to discuss in a group.

PART 1

The battle

A real battle

All human beings are tempted to do wrong. What is more, we all have a bias towards wrongdoing. This is what the Bible means by our sinful nature. Becoming a Christian does not change that sad fact, although we are given a new desire to please God and new strength for the fight. We need to realise that there is a battle to be fought against the world, the flesh (our sinful nature) and the devil.

1. It is not a sin to be tempted

We should distinguish between sin and temptation to sin. We sin when we give in to temptation.

1 **Read James 1:13–15**

When does temptation become sin?

Even Jesus, our pure and holy Saviour, was tempted to sin. He will give us help when we need it.

2 **Look up Hebrews 4:15–16**

What shall we receive and find at the throne of grace?

2. Coping with temptation

Let's be honest: when we give in to temptation, it is because we choose to. That fact should keep us humble! There is no reason why we should give in. We are not the only ones who are tempted, and God always provides an escape.

3 **Look up 1 Corinthians 10:13**

What two things does God promise when we are tempted?

Having persuaded us to sin, the devil then tells us we are failures. Without excusing our sin, we should remember that we are still sinners, and will be until we die. God is rich in mercy if we confess our sins (1 John 1:8–9), and Jesus speaks up for us.

4 **Look up 1 John 2:1**

Whom do we have before the Father, if we do sin?

Now that we are Christians, we cannot be content to go on sinning. As we grow in love for the Lord, we long to be rescued from the effects of sin in the world and the power of sin in our own lives. We can understand Paul's struggle.

5 **Read Romans 7:22–24**

How does Paul describe his struggle?

While we remain in this world, we must resist temptation with all our strength. We have joined the Lord's army; we should fight on His side.

PART 2

Winning the fight

3. What you need to know

There are certain things you need to know if you are to win your fight against temptation.

a) Know the world. It is not as innocent as it looks.

6 **Look up 1 John 2:16**

What three things in the world are not from the Father?

b) Know yourself – the flesh. We are not as strong as we think.

7 **Look up Luke 22:33–34**

What did Peter say he was ready to do, and what did Jesus tell him would happen?

c) Know your enemy – the devil. He is full of deceitful schemes.

8 **Look up 2 Corinthians 2:11**

What do we know about Satan?

The devil is cunning: he sometimes appears as "an angel of light".

9 **Look up 2 Corinthians 11:14**

What does Satan pretend to be?

d) Know your Bible. It will help you to know yourself and the devil. It will also tell you of God's grace, and give you more encouragement and practical advice than anything else. Knowing God's word well will help you in the fight against sin.

10 **Look up Psalm 119:9**

How can a young man keep his way pure?

Jesus used the word of God to fight the tempter (Matthew 4:10–11).

4. Strategies for the fight

Our spiritual enemies are deceitful and cunning, so we need the right strategies to defeat them.

a) Be watchful. We must be alert to overcome temptation.

11 **Look up Mark 14:38**

What two things does Jesus tell us to do, so that we do not enter into temptation?

b) Be prayerful (Mark 14:38 again). Jesus is more powerful than the devil, so we should ask for His help and stay close to Him.

12 **Look up Hebrews 2:18**

Why is Jesus able to help those who are being tempted?

c) Fill your mind with pure things. Don't dwell on things that are sinful and sordid.

13 **Look up Philippians 4:8**

What kinds of things are we to think about?

d) Run away from temptation! This is wise, not cowardly.

14 **Look up 2 Timothy 2:22**

What are we to flee from, and what are we to pursue?

e) Resist the tempter. A basic principle, but hard to do. We must be firm and simply say "No" to the devil's suggestions.

15 **Look up James 4:7**

What will the devil do if we resist him?

Like our Lord, seek the strength of fellowship with other believers (Matthew 26:36–38).

5. Conclusion

Birds and nests

An old proverb says, "You can't stop birds flying over your head, but you can stop them building nests in your hair." We cannot get away from temptation, but we can stop it overcoming us.

Finally, remember that you will only be perfect in heaven!

THINK IT THROUGH

Questions for reflection and discussion

1. What is the difference between being tempted and sinning?

2. Which of the five strategies do you most need to put into practice?

3. How does it help to know that Jesus was tempted too, and speaks up for us?

HIDE IT IN YOUR HEART

Memory verse for study 10

Learn this verse by heart this week. Cut out the card and keep it where you will see it.

STARTING OUT AS A CHRISTIAN · STUDY 10 · MEMORY VERSE

“No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide an escape, so that you can stand up under it.”

1 Corinthians 10:13

Berean Standard Bible · biblehelp.net

“I have hidden Your word in my heart that I might not sin against You.” (Psalm 119:11, BSB)

AT THE BACK

The Bible passages (BSB)

1 **James 1:13–15** *13When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He tempt anyone. 14But each one is tempted when by his own evil desires he is lured away and enticed. 15Then after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.*

2 **Hebrews 4:15–16** *15For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who was tempted in every way that we are, yet was without sin. 16Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.*

3 **1 Corinthians 10:13** *No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide an escape, so that you can stand up under it.*

4 **1 John 2:1** *My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you will not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate before the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.*

5 **Romans 7:22–24** *22For in my inner being I delight in God's law. 23But I see another law at work in my body, warring against the law of my mind and holding me captive to the law of sin that dwells within me. 24What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?*

6 **1 John 2:16** *For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh, the desires of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not from the Father but from the world.*

7 **Luke 22:33–34** *33"Lord," said Peter, "I am ready to go with You even to prison and to death." 34But Jesus replied, "I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow today until you have denied three times that you know Me."*

8 **2 Corinthians 2:11** *in order that Satan should not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.*

9 **2 Corinthians 11:14** *And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light.*

10 **Psalm 119:9** *How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to Your word.*

11 **Mark 14:38** *Watch and pray so that you will not enter into temptation. For the spirit is willing, but the body is weak."*

12 **Hebrews 2:18** *Because He Himself suffered when He was tempted, He is able to help those who are being tempted.*

13 **Philippians 4:8** *Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think on these things.*

14 **2 Timothy 2:22** *Flee from youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, together with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.*

15 **James 4:7** *Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*

Scripture: Berean Standard Bible (BSB), public domain. Quotations keep its American spelling. Like many English Bibles, it often says ‘man’, ‘he’ or ‘brothers’ where it means people in general, men and women alike.

FOR GROUP LEADERS

Study 10: Resisting temptation

> **Memory verse:** “No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide an escape, so that you can stand up under it.” (1 Corinthians 10:13). Say it together at the end, and ask who can say it without looking.

Aims

- Distinguish temptation from sin, and show that God always provides an escape.
- Encourage those who fall: confession, God's mercy and Christ our advocate.
- Equip believers to fight: know the world, yourself, the devil and the Bible; be watchful, prayerful, pure-minded, ready to run and to resist.

Suggested timing (about 60 minutes)

- **5 min** Welcome and short prayer.
- **20 min** Part 1 video (4 min); James 1:13–15, Hebrews 4:15–16, 1 Corinthians 10:13, 1 John 2:1 and Romans 7:22–24.
- **30 min** Part 2 video (5 min); 1 John 2:16, Luke 22:33–34, 2 Corinthians 2:11, 11:14, Psalm 119:9, Mark 14:38, Hebrews 2:18, Philippians 4:8, 2 Timothy 2:22 and James 4:7.
- **5 min** Summary and closing prayer.

Tips

- Be careful not to make anyone feel singled out; temptation is common to all.
- Stress both sides: we are responsible when we give in, and God is rich in mercy when we confess.
- Practical: help each other identify "escape routes" and accountability with a trusted Christian friend.

Answers to watch for

- **James 1:13–15:** God tempts no one; desire conceives and gives birth to sin.
- **Hebrews 4:15–16:** Jesus was tempted in every way, yet without sin; come for mercy and grace.
- **1 Corinthians 10:13:** God is faithful; He provides an escape.
- **1 John 2:1:** we have an advocate before the Father, Jesus Christ.
- **Romans 7:22–24:** "What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me...?"
- **1 John 2:16:** the desires of the flesh, the desires of the eyes and the pride of life.
- **Luke 22:33–34:** Peter's confidence, and Jesus' warning that he would deny Him.
- **2 Corinthians 2:11; 11:14:** we know Satan's schemes; he masquerades as an angel of light.
- **Psalm 119:9:** keep your way pure by guarding it according to God's word.
- **Mark 14:38:** watch and pray.
- **Hebrews 2:18:** Jesus is able to help those who are being tempted.
- **Philippians 4:8:** think about whatever is true, noble, right, pure and lovely.
- **2 Timothy 2:22:** flee evil desires; pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace.
- **James 4:7:** resist the devil, and he will flee from you.