

Week 47: "Temptation"

Day One: "Temptation"

Read Matthew 4:1-11 (p. 1079)

Read Commentary (p. 1080)

Reflect:

In what areas are you particularly vulnerable to temptation?

Dig:

Who led Jesus into the desert to be tempted? (v.1)

How do you reconcile this with James 1:13? (p. 1441)

The commentary states that the role of the tempter is to get us to function independently of God our Father. Note how even Jesus—the Son of God—did only what his heavenly Father commanded: John 8:28 (p. 1211) and John 5:19 (p. 1204)

Related to this, what good can come from trials and even temptation?

See 2 Corinthians 1:9 (p. 1328)

What assurance does I Corinthians 10:13 provide? (p. 1316)

Apply:

2 Corinthians 10:4,5 says "The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ."

Take whatever you listed above as a temptation for you and ask for God's strength to take captive even the thought of that temptation and to make it obedient to Christ.

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Day Two: "The Lust of the Flesh"

Read Deuteronomy 8:1-3 (p. 201)

Read Commentary (p. 202)

Reflect:

When was the last time that you gave in to a 'lust of the flesh'? If you haven't already done so, take time to confess this to God so that you may receive his grace and more clearly understand and hear his word.

Dig:

According to James 1:14,15 (p. 1441) what is the source of temptation?

What are the stages of temptation mentioned in v. 15?

How do you see these stages played out in the Garden of Eden? (Genesis 3:1-7, 19; p. 6,8)

Contrast that to Jesus' temptation in Matthew 4:1-11 (p.1079). At what stage does the progression stop?

(See also Hebrews 4:15; p. 1424)

What advice does scripture give to stop the progression of these stages? See 2 Timothy 2:22 (p. 1406) and James 4:7 (1446).

Apply:

Romans 13:14 says "clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ and do not think about [ital. added] how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature." Ask for God's strength to do this by praying the following prayer from Psalm 19:13,14:

"Keep your servant also from willful sins; may they not rule over me....May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer."

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Day Three: "The Lust of the Eyes"

Read Deuteronomy 6:4-19 (p. 199)

Read Commentary (p. 199)

Reflect:

The commentary says "the lust of the eyes subtly draws us away from the Word of God and eats away at our confidence in God." How much time have you been spending in God's word recently? How much confidence do you have in God?

Dig:

Compare the commands of Deuteronomy 6 with how the Israelites actually responded (see Psalm 78). How have you responded to these commands?

Command	Israel's Response	Your Response
Deut. 6:5,6	Psalm 78:10 (p. 642)	
Deut. 6:12	Psalm 78:11	
Deut. 6:13,14	Psalm 78:8,36,37,57	
Deut. 6:16	Psalm 78:18,41,56	
Deut. 6:18,19	Psalm 78:17,22	

Apply:

As the Holy Spirit leads you, confess those areas where the "lust of the eyes" has drawn you away from God's word and adhering to his commands. You may want to pray this prayer from Psalm 119:36,37:

"Turn my heart toward your statutes and not toward selfish gain. Turn my eyes away from worthless things; preserve my life according to your word."

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Day Four: "The Pride of Life"

Read Proverbs 16:16-24 (p. 709)

Read Commentary (p. 710)

Reflect:

When was the last time that pride reared its ugly head in your life? How did it express itself—in arrogance, critical attitude, selfishness, independence from God, jealousy...?

Dig:

What does scripture say is God's relationship with the proud? See the following passages:

Prov. 3:34 (p. 696)

Psalms 138:6 (p. 681)

For a vivid account of how seriously God looks upon pride, read Daniel 4:28-37 (p. 967).

Apply:

Humble yourself before God that he may lift you up (1 Peter 5:6, p. 1454). Acknowledge your dependence on him by praying Psalm 62 (p. 632).

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Day Five: "Too Much of a Good Thing"

Read Proverbs 25:16 (p. 721)

Read Commentary (p. 722)

Reflect:

Take a careful look at the list of "excessives" in the commentary. In your own life, what tendencies to take God's good gifts beyond the boundary of His will do you see?

Dig:

Read Exodus 16:11-20 (p.82).

What was the good gift that God provided?

What specific commands did he send along with the gift?

What happened when people broke those commands or went beyond the limits set by God?

What do you suppose prompted them to go beyond God's limit and disobey his instructions?

What parallels do you see in your life?

Apply:

Confess those areas of your life where you see a tendency to let a good gift be misused or abused. Ask for God's strength to avoid such tendencies.