

This Life is a Test!

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VIRTUAL



Being *tempted* and *tested* is part of life but getting through it successfully means calling on God at the moment of the temptation. ¹ Corinthians 10:13 “*There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer [allow] you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*”

It is our responsibility to ask for the way of escape! Traps, pitfalls, and snares are everywhere today and of every imaginable type. They have been on the increase—with Satan presenting them in new and more evil ways. Commercials, billboards, the Internet, iPhones, iPads, Twitter, Face Book, Instagram, and a multitude of other media devices present new and diverse temptations.

Anyone connected to any social media today can quickly be led into dark areas with images, photos, and web sites that attract the eye but present *serious* temptations. Every prayer every day should include ^{Matthew 6:13} “*Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.*” We are responsible to ^{Matthew 26:41} “*Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.*” Temptations are real and everywhere—Satan sets the trap!

The devil’s focus is to *delude, deceive, and destroy* us, so he presents temptations where we are prone to give in. Whatever works for *him* is used against *us*. No one is exempted from temptation! Even Jesus was led into a wilderness ^{Matthew 4:1} “*To be tempted of the devil.*”

Satan wants everyone to be *in sin* when Jesus returns *in Person*, so he ramps up evil plans to deceive and destroy God’s people. Immoral sins increase exponentially—simply because they are *so* tempting to *so* many! We must ¹ Corinthians 6:18 “*Flee fornication,*” because it is a *serious sin* with even more *serious consequences*—it sins against God and against our own body.

Financial temptations increase due to the insatiable lust for money. ¹ Timothy 6:9 “*They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.*”

We must ¹ Timothy 6:11 “*Flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and meekness.*” It is a spiritual battle with a dreadful *enemy*—we must ¹² “*Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life,*” by asking God to help us get passed the temptation. Satan tries to get us to *follow after* materialism, covetousness, greed, and worldly desires.

¹ Timothy 1:18-19 “*This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare; Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck.*”

Satan *targets* the young because he can get them to *desire* unscriptural things, activities, or entertainment. He wants to *defile* their conscience and *shipwreck* their faith. Everyone is in a *serious* battle with a *wicked* enemy who is out to destroy our soul!

The fight is ^{Ephesians 6:12} “*Against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness*

of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” We see this *spiritual wickedness* in city mayors, state governors, and federal agencies today.

Satan and all of his forces are against us—and it seems that he is poised to win, but we are promised victory by faith and trust on the living God who gives us His Spirit to control our choices—victory is promised through the Atonement of Christ.

The devil takes advantage of anything that can possibly lead us into sin. If we love to *read*—the devil entices us to desire worldly material; If we love *music*—he tempts us to like the wrong kind; If we love *sports*—he tempts us to be so engrossed and involved we have no time for *spiritual* interests; even if we love the work we do, he makes the hours so long and the work so hard, that we have no time and no energy for the children. Temptations come in every *form* and every *type*!

Joseph had to call on God for help—*that* enabled him to *run from* a serious temptation that would have defiled his conscience and could destroy his soul. If he would have *hesitated*, he could have *yielded*—and have sinned against himself, his boss, and his God ^{Genesis 39:12}. Joseph was just like *we* are, and temptations to be immoral are just like the one *he* had. The devil knows how effective immoral sins are to defile our conscience and ruin our life.

Immoral sins are not even considered immoral by a world that approves of those who give in and go with the flow. If a young person chooses to obey God’s Word, they are labeled a *loser*—but they are a *winner* in God’s sight. Satan puts pressure on young people to *give in* and *conform* to the world because he knows *that* could forfeit their salvation ^{Matthew 16:26}.

Joseph had committed his life to God—and when a serious temptation was *met*, he was able to *resist*. Joseph’s right choice cost him his job, his

freedom, and his reputation—but it *was* the *scriptural* decision. Joseph was finally rewarded—getting back his *job*, his *freedom*, and his *reputation*. He was given a huge promotion! Things work out for the *best*—when we love God *most*.

If we are foolish enough to be lured by Satan’s enticements, we can give in and suffer serious loss. It could result in an *eternity of suffering* if we play games with an enemy who is poised to win. Matthew 7:13 “*Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat.*” Many have fallen into Satan’s trap and paid the ultimate price.

Satan is so wicked—his suggestions so deceitful—I’m not hurting anyone, he suggests, but we are hurting someone, and it always leads to more serious sins. A wrong *glance*; a quick *click*; or an unguarded *tap* on a smartphone, but it will move us *away* from the Word and *toward* a trap. The enemy is favored to win, but God helps *us* to resist.

Satan can *corrupt* anything, and he *has* for centuries—he will *not* stop now. There are millions of images we can view that can lead to adultery—mental or otherwise—but it *is* a *choice*. God *knows* what we view and every site we visit—He has the *record* of our *surfing* history. “*Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account*” Hebrews 4:13.

We may have had secret thoughts and desires that we would never tell anyone—but God already knows—*nothing* is hid from Him. We make *choices* in our *mind* to go in a certain *direction*. “*Above all else, guard your heart, for it affects everything you do*” Proverbs 4:23. The thoughts we *entertain* can lead to things we will *regret*!

Immoral actions can lead to life-time commitments. Temptations will be met but no one is forced to yield. Jesus warned, *Watch and pray*—or we *may fall* into temptation. If we intentionally

look at tempting images, we are setting ourselves up for big-time failure!

The Bible lists serious *sins* that come from “*pride*” and “*corrupt minds.*” We must replace 1 Timothy 6:4-5 *envy, strife, jealousy, malicious talk and love for money*, with *contentment, peace, love, kindness and devotion to God.*

1 Timothy 6:7 “*For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.*” If we choose correctly, God will teach us “*The secret of being content in any and every situation*” Philippians 4:12.

Satan uses anything—ads, books, films, magazines, smartphones—everything we could imagine to have us be *tempted*—and to the point of *yielding*. He wants us to be discontented, even though we have an abundance of so many things. Hebrews 13:5 “*Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have.*”

Every *desire* must have God’s *approval*. If there be any doubt, we Proverbs 3:6 “*Acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*” Temptations are so *varied* today—and of every type or intensity. Many are tempted to *quit* a job to better their situation, but we are Colossians 3:22 to obey our employer “*In all things*” and at *all* times, because if we *fear God*, we *obey the boss*—as God says Luke 3:14 “*Be content with your wages;*” if we are tempted to borrow money, the Word says Romans 13:8 “*Owe no man any thing, but to love one another.*”

Yes, ***This Life is a Test***—James 1:12 Satan *tempts* when we are *not ready* to resist. The Christian life includes many temptations to sin against God. Little *temptations* can become big *sins*—if we are not ready to *resist* by the help of the *Spirit*. If we keep thinking about *wrong things*, we are heading in the *wrong direction*—and heading for failure. Eve looked, thought, and fell!

We must resist temptations by calling on God—we *cannot* get through in our own strength, but we can Philippians 4:13 “*Do all things through*

Christ who strengthens me.” Jesus died on the cross to cleanse our heart, and to give us the gift of the Holy Spirit—who enables us to *stand* against Satan. “*We have an obligation*” Romans 8:12—“*but it is not to the sinful nature.*” We are obligated to *resist*—not *yield*!

1 Corinthians 10:13 “*No temptation has you in its power but such as is common to human nature; and God is faithful and will not allow you to be tempted beyond your strength.*” The question is whether we are *faithful* to trust God—or *wanting* to follow the world.

Temptations are *real* and the devil is *wicked*, but; 1 John 4:4 “*Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.*” Satan presents the same temptations over and over again, but God has promised an escape 1 Corinthians 10:13. It is our *choice* to *resist* in faith; or to *submit* in unbelief. Getting thru temptations is vital—because Matthew 10:22 “*He who endures to the end will be saved.*”

Temptation is *common*, but resisting is *rare*—even though God *promises* success. Our *part* is our *prayer*—Matthew 6:13 “*Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.*” The Holy Spirit is promised to help us *resist* the devil—then “*He will flee from you*” James 4:7.

The *world* loves a *winner*—and Satan is winning *souls* by the wholesale. We can be on *his* side, give in, and lose big time—or we can be on *God’s* side, resist in faith, and win an eternal prize! Those on Satan’s side are *losers* in a spiritual war that plays for keeps. We *must* resist—by the *power* of the *Blood*—it *is* a battle we *cannot* lose!



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