

Tempted

and Getting Through!



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Special Edition

Due to the recent global crisis, everyone is tempted and must react in one of two ways—in *fear of the unknown future* or in *faith on the Unseen God*. Temptations met right, perfect our faith in Christ right. In any time of temptation, we must choose faith in God over fear of the unknown.

There are many situations in the Bible where they were seriously tempted to react in fear and forgot about faith in whom they should have been trusting. A life-threatening storm arises on the waters as the disciples are in a boat with Jesus. They are not prepared to face it in faith, and so they are fearful—thinking they will all lose their lives. Meanwhile, Jesus is sleeping peacefully!

Instead of looking at Jesus' reaction to the situation, the disciples allowed their situation to dictate their reactions. They beg Jesus to do something, so He calms the storm—but not before asking them: *Matthew 8:26* “*Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm.*”

They react with *Matthew 8:27* “*What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!*” The gentle rebuke of their Master over their lack of faith, was not because they did not believe Jesus could save them *from* the storm, but because they struggled to believe He would get them *through* the storm. When we find ourselves in the midst of a storm—things that may seem out

of our control—we must always respond with faith in God to see us through. There are three things we could recall.

1/ God is more powerful than any storm. If the wind and waves do not concern *Him*, then they should not frighten *us*. We may not be able to change the situation we are in, but we can choose to faithfully trust God in the midst of the storm we are in.

2/ Keeping our eyes on Jesus always leads us to peace. If we are looking at the *size* and *intensity* of the storm, the devil causes fear, but when we keep our eyes on the *One* who can *calm* the storm, the Lord gives us peace and assurance. By focusing on God, who knows the beginning to the end of everything, we can navigate through the storm with His wisdom and in peace.

3/ Jesus is always with us *through* the storm. The devil makes it easy to focus on fear of the future, but Jesus *knows* the future, and He is always by our side, if we will reach out to Him and accept the peace He offers—going *through* the storm by *faith* not by *sight*. *John 14:27* “*Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*”

With any storm we encounter in life, we have two choices—focus on the *situation* or focus on the *Savior*! If we choose to look only to Jesus and the peace and assurance He alone can give, we begin to realize that the storms we face, are not as powerful as the God we trust.

Satan tries to have us think that the storms are overwhelming—but the Lord Jesus, who walks with us along the way, is much more *powerful*, more *willing*, and *able* to change any situation we are in, as we continue to trust Him in faith for His *solution* and His *promise* to see us through.

Anything we want to accomplish involves a learning curve or some study if we want to reach a higher level of competence. In like manner, temptations are *met*, so that spiritual learning *results*. The most valuable information we will ever obtain is a thorough knowledge of the living God.

Jesus told us to *Mark 14:38* “*Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak.*” Dealing with any temptation according to the *Word of God*, will refine our faith in the *Son of God*. *Hebrews 2:18* “*Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.*”

Since we begin life with no knowledge of God, and with no desire or ability to trust Him, it can take many lessons and tests before we begin to learn about our Creator—what His power will do, when we trust Him in faith to do them. These learning sessions are often called *difficult trials* or *serious temptations*, but they will test our faith and trust on God.

The condition of knowing *nothing* about what God *will* do, has to be changed to knowing *much* about what God *wants* to do—in protecting, providing, healing, and guiding us through temptations—as we continue to trust Him in faith every day. Whether a small *temptation* or a serious *trial*, we are to meet them according to the Word—which will increase our faith and trust in the Lord.

Jesus cannot really be *King* of our life, until the Word of God is the absolute *guide* of our life. If self is trusted; divine power is hindered. *John 12:24* “*Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.*”

This knowledge of God is not learned in a day, but anyone can enroll in His school, simply by a choice to learn from the various temptations

and tests that come our way. It takes a real commitment to *know*, and a genuine desire to *learn* by obeying God's Word with all issues. If we are willing to go through temptations according to the Word, God supplies the ability to see us through successfully.

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. But, when the temptation comes, He will also provide the way of escape; so that you may be able to bear it."*

We have to be *willing* to resist before God can furnish the *power* to resist. Temptations are tests to see if we will place God's Word first. Every difficult situation or person, and every loss or gain that comes our way, is a test of our obedience to the Word.

Any *outward* show of piety, with no *inward* trust on God, is being a Pharisee. True faith in God is what dying to self is all about. The living Word of God is a shining light on our path and must be followed closely. Real temptations and tests are recorded in the Bible.

Hebrews 11:37-39 *"They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise."*

They lived up to the *Word of God* and were trained by the *power of God* for greater blessings—which He has for anyone whose faith is real. Hebrews 11:40 *"God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."*

Real *temptations* test real *faith*—proving whether our trust is truly on God or not. Hebrews 12:2 *"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."*

Hebrews 12:3 *"For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls."* The situation has not changed since the time Bible believers were persecuted. Jesus said Matthew 24:37 *"As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man."* He meant that people would be going about their lives, and many being tested in faith through trials, but most would not be trusting God.

Temptations are tests to see if we will swerve from God's Word, and cave to the pressure of the world—whether it be a financial, medical, or protection issue that Satan inspired to be written and offered. Three Hebrews were under tremendous pressure from the command of a ruthless dictator. They had no count-appointed lawyer and no appeals to the Supreme Court. They would have to disobey God's Word or burn to death in a furnace.

Escaping that fate would cost no money—just follow the crowd. They did not have to contact an attorney or hire the services of a legal defense group. All they needed to do to escape a horrible form of execution was to bend their backs in mock worship of an idol. They could easily walk away free and unharmed—but at the cost of denying their faith in God.

Everything in the Christian life is to be done by the power of God. John 6:63 *"It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life."* It is this way because 1 Corinthians 1:29 *"no flesh should glory in his presence."* This dependence

on the divine power of God concerns everything—our finances, our loved ones, our employment, our children, and everything else.

Every temptation is a test to determine if the *self way* of the world is gone, and the *Spirit* of the living God has taken its place. *Our* reply to temptation has to be *their* reply. Daniel 3:16-18 *"O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."*

The gateway to God's blessings is right there in that reply. Everyone who enters God's kingdom will pass through this same gate of faith. Jesus said that many are called but few chosen Matthew 20:16. We must Matthew 7:13 *"Enter ye in at the strait gate,"* because the other one leads to death.

We must face these temptations successfully while we have the opportunity to face them—we must 2 Peter 1:10-11 *"Be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things [being tempted in faith, but keeping our trust on God], you will never stumble; for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."* We are all tempted but getting through in faith on God!



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