

AVOIDING TEMPTATIONS OF THE WORLD TODAY

(COULD CHOOSE OUR DESTINY)

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We may not like to think that we choose our destiny, but God has given that choice to everyone. Every temptation presents a choice (a choice to go in one of two directions), toward the *Word of God*, or toward the World. Today's technology has just about *everyone* connected to someone or some kind of information, news, or images! Temptations have increased dramatically and in many different forms!

Satan will use everything and anything to tempt people. Temptations are more *serious*; are of greater *diversity*; and easier to yield to than ever before! Satan is working overtime to ruin the lives of people here on earth, and to destroy their souls forever in eternity, with many new ways to harm the unsuspecting one.

Satan can tempt anyone at any time—often using unscriptural thoughts, and then to condemn us for having had such thoughts. Being *tempted* does not mean we have *sinned* (not yet) anyway! If we are tempted with any kind of unscriptural desire, it *is* (at *that* point) just a *temptation* and not a *sin*, unless we *yield* to the temptation through our being off our guard and not on the alert!

It is all about the choices we need to make (and no one is *exempted* from temptation), but everyone has been given the *promise* of the ability to *resist*, if we will choose to ask God for help when being tempted. (1 Cor.10:13) *"The temptations that come into your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will keep the temptation from becoming so strong that you cannot stand up against it. When you are tempted, He will show you a way out, so that you will not give in to it."*

Too many times, one may keep looking at a tempting image—even if having *prayed* to be delivered from such. If Eve had not kept looking at the fruit, the temptation would *not* have become *so strong*; and the results would *not* have been *so disastrous!* We know our weak areas, and so does the devil. We should not *put* ourselves in tempting situations.

The 'love for money' has tempted people for ages past. (1 Tim.6:9-10) *"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. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and, pierced themselves through, with many sorrows."*

The choice we have is to move away from the tempting situation. Otherwise, we are asking to be tempted by staring at a *tempting* image, so we then risk yielding to the temptation. That choice is always ours; and we *always* have the Holy Spirit to help us (if we *want* His help). (Matt.6:13 says) *"Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil"—that is our everyday prayer.*

The Christian life is a *serious struggle* against a dangerous enemy, Satan, who tempts us in any way, or by any means he can. Satan knows our weak areas better than we do, and he will take advantage of that type of temptation. (Gal.6:7) *"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."*

We choose what doctrine we accept as a way of life. False doctrines jeopardize 'eternal life'. '*Once Saved Always Saved*' is a deadly delusion that has caused millions of people to let down their spiritual guard against temptation and sin. Satan has presented an enticing religious message, and multitudes have accepted it thinking that they will always stay saved—(even if they have sinned by yielding to temptation.)

Millions of people are misled; to think they can never be out of God's grace, (no matter *what* sins they commit or wrong attitudes they retain). The truth is *"Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed."* (James 1:14) If there is not real repentance; no forsaking of sin; and no returning to a position of trust on God; then the Lake of Fire would be the result.

King David had the Holy Spirit, and he was *in* God's will, but he later yielded to temptation, committed adultery, and took himself out of God's will. He even plotted to have Uriah killed. King David would have gone straight to the Lake of Fire, had he not sincerely confessed and repented of those serious sins. It was his choice to turn back to God and be forgiven, or, to rebel and be lost.

When we are tempted to do something we know is wrong; when we are tempted to entertain Unscriptural thoughts; or, when we are tempted to have a wrong attitude toward someone, that is being tempted; but we have not sinned; not yet, but only when we follow through with them. God says, “*All have sinned*” (says Rom.3:23). Sin must be dealt with via repentance and recommitment to God.

Sins do not have to be continuous to be sin, because telling one lie makes us a liar; stealing one item defines a thief; killing one time is murder, and being greedy one time makes us an ‘idolater’. We are told (Rev.21:8) “*The fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.*”

The apostle says (Eph.5:5) no “Covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.” Jesus warned us (Matt.24:4) “Take heed that no man deceive you.”

Eve was tempted and yielded because she stayed near the tempting fruit. And everyone born since then has a nature that is prone to do the very same. Temptation is not sin, until our choice is to yield. Being tempted is for sure, but (1 John 1:9 says) “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and, to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

God knows the fate of those who sin, so He (in His mercy) is ready to forgive, if we will confess and forsake them. ‘Repenting is more than just being sorry.’ Judas betrayed Jesus, felt sorry, and even returned the money, (but he did not repent and did not ask Jesus to forgive him. Instead, Judas committed suicide and went to “The fiery lake of burning sulfur” as an unrepentant murderer. (Rev.21:8) Wrong choice, ‘wrong destination!’

Jesus said to take serious action against serious temptations. (Matt.5:30) “*If your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.*”

We should get rid of anything that is causing us to sin; mindless Web surfing, Cell phone scrolling, worldly entertainment, alcohol, questionable books-(fictional, or with other wrong and unScriptural information that Satan will always use to tempt us to follow that with our decisions), also unScriptural magazines, unbelieving friends (through social media or in person), laid-up money, or anything else that is causing us (or can cause us) to make ‘wrong choices’.

We need to ‘take heed’ as Jesus warned, and we must take drastic action to remove a source of unscriptural influence and images. Jesus said (Matt.5:30) “*It is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.*” Anything that can be or does tempt us, should be removed by our Scriptural decision!

If a ‘worldly friend’ tempts us to sin, we should end the friendship; If a magazine tempts us with immoral or other wrong thoughts, we should shred it. If Web-surfing tempts us to view immoral or other evil images, we cancel the online service. It is far better to be rid of them than to keep them and keep sinning. It is all too easy to “gain the world, and to forfeit our eternal soul” (Matt.16:26).

The devil has a custom-made temptation just for each one of us, and he knows where we are weak, and will exploit that area. Jesus has given ample warning to take serious action against serious temptation. Jesus told us to confess; repent; and forsake sins. Everyone is accountable, so everyone must repent and make corrections! John the Baptist was sent to us with a ‘message of repentance’, and he warned everyone that we must repent (Matt.3:8-10) “*Therefore let your lives prove your change of heart; and do not imagine that you can say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our forefather,’ for I tell you that God can raise up descendants for Abraham from these stones.* And already the axe is lying at the root of the trees, so that every tree which does not produce good fruit will quickly be hewn down and thrown into the fire.”

Our being tempted is a certainty, but the choices we make can be right ones (with the Holy Spirit’s help). Satan can present temptation in a second, and we must resist instantly. We have been given many warnings, such as (1 Pet.5:8) “*Be sober, be vigilant; because your*

adversary the devil,” is like a lion, “seeking whom he may devour.”

Our being tempted can happen so quickly, and it can come from various sources. Like cell phones, iPads, text messaging, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tik-Tok, television, books, magazines, web sites, email, and other forms of communication, (and a few taps can take us into murky or forbidden waters). We must be aware and guard against it!

It is so easy to be angry about something, or toward someone, but it is just a temptation and not a sin until we give in and resent them (and maybe plot a payday). We are not obligated “to the sinful nature to live according to it.” (Rom.8:12-13 says) *“For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but, if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.”*

Old habits can be tough to break, and harder to forsake, but we have to, because (Gal.2:20) says of a truly surrendered person, *“The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”* No one can afford to forfeit their soul! We cannot allow anything or anyone to take us outside of God’s will. Being with Jesus forever is our only objective.

Temptation and sin are most surely connected to desire and deception. Satan first places a desire in our heart for something outside the will of God. Then he will have us justify getting what we desire and thinking that *‘I’m not harming anyone’* (he suggests). That desire can become so strong we are deceived about the consequences.

(James 1:14-16) *“Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. ‘Do not err’ or [be not led astray YLT], my beloved brethren.”*

The battle is for the mind, as we think we need something or that we deserve something. If the desire is unScriptural, the devil is poised to deceive us, and to convince us to try it. If we lose the battle with desire, we are then easy prey to deception, which leads to disobedience, then to sin and ‘eternal fire’.

When being tempted with anything, we must always ask for God’s never-ending promise to help us. The longer we delay asking Him,

the more likely we will yield. Eve hesitated, kept looking and failed! However, Joseph did not hesitate, did not ponder the matter, but quickly ran out of the house!

When we are tempted to resent a wrong; mindlessly surf the Web; slander another’s reputation; hang out with the wrong friends; “lay up treasure” on earth (as Jesus solemnly and seriously warned us not to do), (Luke 12:20-21) *“But God said to him, ‘Foolish man, this night your life is demanded from you; and these preparations—for whom shall they be?’* So is it with him who amasses treasure for himself but has no riches in God.” Or when we are tempted to do anything against God’s will, (we are being tempted, but we have not sinned, (not yet!) And, we do not have to sin, nor give in, because the power to resist is promised to be within us (1 John 4:4) *“Greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world.”* &&&&&&&

S425R-SOME MAIN POINTS ARE:

The message emphasizes that Satan will use everything and anything he can to tempt people. Temptations are more serious; they are of greater diversity; and made easier for one to yield to than ever before! Satan is working overtime to ruin the lives of people here on earth, and, to also destroy their souls forever in eternity, with many new ways to harm an unsuspecting people.

Satan often uses unScriptural desires or thoughts to our mind, and, then tries to condemn us for having had such thoughts. Being tempted does not mean we have sinned (not yet) anyway! At that point it is just a temptation and not a sin unless we yield to the temptation through our being off guard and not on the alert! (and Jesus has warned us to watch and pray ahead to God), to “lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.” &&&&&&&

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