

Overcoming Temptation & Doubts

Introduction

- continuation of Jan 11th sermon....about wavering & temptation
- wavering, doubts, temptation are something every one of us faces, no matter our age, background, or level of spiritual maturity. It's a universal experience.
- started from as far back as in the Garden of Eden (Gen 3) when the serpent said to Eve..."did God really say?" Does what God says really matter? Can God keep His promises anyways?
- we know that the enemy uses temptation to lure us away from God's purpose for our lives, lessen our impact, turn down our volume, halt/stunt our contribution
- although each of us will face temptation...there is AMAZING news...it won't break us, it doesn't have to cause us to miss the mark, separate us from God! It is not meant to define us! God always provides a way out!

1 Corinthians 10:13 (NIV)

"No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. 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 a way out so that you can endure it."

1. Recognize that Temptation is Part of the Human Experience

In 1 Corinthians 10:13, Paul makes it clear that temptation is "common to mankind." No one is exempt.

The enemy wants to make us feel isolated in our struggles, as though we're the only ones who deal with temptation. But the truth is, we are all in the same boat. Every single person within the sound of my voice has weaknesses, vulnerabilities, areas that the enemy can come and in his twisted way cause doubts, temptation to come ("did God really say" from the Garden of Eden)

Even Jesus Himself was tempted in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11).

Temptation is not a sign of weakness or a failure of your faith; it's simply part of the journey of being human.

Temptation doesn't mean you are failing—it **means you're in a battle.** And like any battle, one of the primary keys to victory is preparation.

2 Cor. 10:3-5 *For though we live in the world, **we do not wage war as the world does.** **4** The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. **5** 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.*

Eph. 6:10-18 **10** *Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. **11** Put on the full armor of God, so that you can **take your stand against the devil's schemes.** **12** For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. **13** Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. **14** Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, **15** and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. **16** In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. **17** Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. **18** And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.*

God gives us these weapons because temptation is going to be part of our experience

2. Trust in God's Faithfulness

1 Corinthians 10:13 (NIV)

*"No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. **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 a way out so that you can endure it."*

The second part of the verse says, "And God is faithful." When we face temptation, the first step is to remember that God is **faithful**. (Loyal, constant, true, devoted, exact, unerring)

He is always with us, He hasn't forgotten you, He is not removed from your reality, He is with you in your struggle

He will not allow us to be tempted beyond what we can bear. This doesn't mean that temptation will always be easy to overcome, but it does mean that it won't break us, won't define us

Hebrews 10:19-23 *Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, **20** by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, **21** and since we have a great priest over the house of God, **22 let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings**, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. **23** Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, **for he who promised is faithful. 24** And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, **25** not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.*

Psalms 36:5 *"Your steadfast love, O Lord, extends to the heavens, **your faithfulness** to the clouds"*

3. Look for the Way Out

1 Corinthians 10:13 (NIV)

"No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. 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 a way out so that you can endure it."

Paul continues, "He will also provide a way out so that you can endure it." Here's the promise: God doesn't just leave us to deal with temptation on our own. **He always provides a way out.**

The key is to **look for it**. God has promised that a way out will be there, and it's often in the moments we least expect it.

- **change in circumstances or environment**
- **change in thinking, reframing**
- **change in our decision making**
- **change in how we are talking about the situation**

Lamentations 3:25 *The Lord is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who **seeks** him.*

This is what God wants....not a manmade effort to manufacture solutions....but a desperate and passionate seeking of Him!

Deuteronomy 4:29 *But if from there you seek the Lord your God, **you will find him if you seek him with all your heart** and with all your soul.*

Hebrews 11:6 *And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that **he rewards those who earnestly seek him.***

4. Resist the Devil

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

Resistance isn't passive. It's an active choice to stand firm in what we know is true about God and ourselves. Temptation often thrives in moments of weakness, so resisting it begins with recognizing that we need God's strength to stand.

Practicing the 12 pathways in our lives creates a sustainable rhythm that actively resists the devil!!

Scripture	Worship	Prayer	Fasting
Gathering	Relationships	Reaching	Accountability
Rest	Generosity	Stewardship	Service

5. Remember the End Goal: fullness of life in Christ

Temptation often tries to offer instant satisfaction, but the truth is that it leads to destruction

James 1:15 *Then, after **desire** has conceived, it gives birth to **sin**; and sin, when it is full grown, gives birth to **death.***

Remember the way out that God provides leads to life.

Remember the joy of a life lived fully in obedience to God

Remember the peace of walking in God's will

Remember the reward of His presence

Remember the ability to hit the mark for which we were created

Hebrews 12:1-2 reminds us to run the race with perseverance and to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, "*the pioneer and perfecter of faith.*"

The wavering/doubts/temptations which the enemy meant for evil, to rob from you, destroy you, mess you up....as we experience God's power in it... turns to praise/awe/amazement/wonder/heartfelt worship