

## **“Temptation”**

### **Matthew 26:36-41**

Introduction: In the context of the Scripture Jesus is leading Peter and the two sons of Zebedee to a place of prayer. Evidently, they were taken to help Jesus pray during a difficult time in His life. However, while our Lord was praying, the disciples were sleeping. Jesus asked them why they could not watch for one hour. Then, He revealed to them the importance of watching and praying. We need prayer in our life to avoid temptation to sin. Observe the lesson Jesus taught His disciples concerning temptation.

1. The Prevention of Temptation v. 41- *“Watch and pray”*
  - a. “watch” (Strong’s)- “metaph. give strict attention to, be cautious, active”
  - b. “pray” (Strong’s)- “to offer prayers, to pray”
  - c. John H. Eastwood once said, “People do not decide to be drunkards, drug addicts, prostitutes, murderers, or thieves, but they pitch their tent toward Sodom, and the powers of evil overcome them.”
2. The Path to Temptation v. 41- *“that ye enter not into temptation”*
  - a. Matthew 6:13- *“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen”*
  - b. Luke 11:4- *“And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil”*
  - c. Erwin Lutzer once said, “Our response to temptation is an accurate barometer of our love for God.”
3. The Problem with Temptation v. 41- *“the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak”*
  - a. Galatians 6:1- *“Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted”*
  - b. Henry Ward Beecher once said, “Oftentimes great and open temptations are the most harmless because they come with banners flying and bands playing and all the munitions of war in full view, so that we know we are in the midst of enemies that mean us damage, and we get ready to meet and resist them. Our peculiar dangers are those that surprise us and work treachery in our fort.”
  - c. The old Spanish proverb states, “Step not on the sleeping serpent.”
  - d. John Bunyan once said, “Temptations, when we first meet them, are as the lion that roared upon Samson; but if we overcome them, the next time we see them we shall find a nest of honey within them.”

Body: The Strong’s concordance defined temptation as, “an experiment, attempt, trial, proving; the trial of man’s fidelity, integrity, virtue, constancy”. Then, Webster interpreted it as, “The act of tempting; enticement to evil by arguments, by flattery, or by the offer of some real or apparent good. Solicitation of the passions; enticements to evil proceeding from the prospect of pleasure or advantage.” Therefore, we conclude that

temptations are to fulfill our sinful appetites. Hence, since we should not sin, the Bible offers several passages in order to help us when it comes to temptation. Notice:

I. The Place of Temptations

A. Self Galatians 4:14- *“And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus”*

B. Satan I Corinthians 7:5- *“Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency”*

1. Matthew 4:3- *“And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread”*

2. I Thessalonians 3:5- *“For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain”*

a. An Arabian proverb once said, “They said to a mouse, ‘There is a piece of cheese on the cat's whiskers.’ She replied, ‘Yes, the cheese is delicious, but the way to it is risky’ .”

b. An African proverb once said, “When the spider would attack thee, it extends its web to entangle thee.”

II. The Period of Temptations

A. Hourly Revelation 3:10- *“Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth”*

B. Daily Hebrews 3:8- *“Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness”*

C. Monthly Mark 1:13- *“And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him”*

III. The Plentitude of Temptations James 1:14- *“But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed”*

A. Many Temptations Acts 20:19- *“Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews”*

B. More Temptations James 1:2- *“My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations”*

C. Manifold Temptations I Peter 1:6- *“Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations”*

1. A man once said, “Where there's smoke there's fire.”

2. The old Chinese proverb states, “Who rides a tiger cannot dismount.”

IV. The Prevention of Temptations

A. We are to Escape I Corinthians 10:13- *“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer 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”*

1. II Peter 2:9- *“The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished”*
  2. *“However big the whale may be, the tiny harpoon can rob him of his life.” (Malay Proverb)*
  3. Mark Twain once said, *“It is easier to stay out than to get out.”*
- B. We are to Endure James 1:12- *“Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him”*
1. Keep in mind that it is one thing to be tempted, and another to fall.
  2. An old proverb once said, *“An idle person tempts the devil to tempt him.”*
  3. Thomas Jefferson once said, *“Do not bite at the bait of pleasure till you know there is no hook beneath it.”*

Conclusion: It is our Lord’s desire for us not to be conquered by the temptations of our flesh and Satan. Therefore, He set the example for us to follow. Seemingly, people may cry out, *“Jesus does not understand my fleshly appetites and lustful desires!”* However, Jesus does understand, as we will see in the following outline. Therefore, we must watch and pray that we enter not into temptation.

1. Jesus Suffered Temptation
  - a. Matthew 4:1- *“Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil”*
  - b. Mark 1:13- *“And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him”*
  - c. Luke 4:2- *“Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered”*
2. Jesus Subdued Temptation Hebrews 4:15- *“For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin”*
3. Jesus Succors Temptation Hebrews 2:18- *“For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted”*