

Discipleship Lesson #8

(Temptation)

_____ 1. Read the book of James as outlined.

Day	Read
First Day	Faith Tested James 1:1-21
Second Day	Faith Lived Out James 1:22-27
Third Day	Faith and Brotherhood James 2:1-13
Fourth Day	Faith Dead Without Works James 2:14-26
Fifth Day	Faith and Tongue Control James 3:1-18
Sixth Day	Faith Rebukes Worldliness James 4:1-17
Seventh Day	Faith in Prayer James 5:1-20

_____ 2. Read and complete material on “Assurance of Victory Over Temptation”.

_____ 3. Read material, “The Tactics of Temptation”.

_____ 4. Memorize **1 Corinthians 10:13**.

_____ 5. Memorize the names of the Old Testament Books - Ecclesiastes through Malachi.

- Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy
 - Joshua, Judges, Ruth
 - 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles
 - Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther
 - Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon
 - Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel
 - Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi
- (See also Page 19)

_____ 6. Outline the Pastor's Sunday sermon.

Your obedience to God is based upon the fact He is your Creator and you are His creation. You obey Him because of who He is. But the life of obedience is also concerned with your own spiritual welfare because God loves you.

Since as Christians we are not immune from temptation and sin, it is important that you know and understand the victory and deliverance that God offers. You cannot live victoriously in your own strength. To the extent that you appropriate God's provision for victory, you can experience the life of obedience. "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me." ([Galatians 2:20](#))

Assurance of Victory Over Temptation

Memorize **1 Corinthians 10:13**

Meditation on **1 Corinthians 10:13**

What is true about every temptation you face?

Who can give you victory when you are tempted?

What can keep temptation from leading to sin?

Does God remove temptation?.

What does God do for you?

Thought Questions

1. What is the purpose of trials and temptations according to [James 1:2-4](#)?
2. What is a major source of temptation? ([James 1:13,14](#))
3. What are three areas of temptation in the world? ([1 John 2:15,16](#))
4. When the devil tempts you, what is he seeking to do? [1 Peter 5:8](#)
5. What does God do for you? [2 Thessalonians 3:3](#)
6. What does [Hebrews 4:15](#) tell you about Jesus Christ?
7. What are some of the things you can do to keep temptation from leading to sin?

[Matthew 6:9-13](#)

[Psalm 119:9-11](#)

[1 John 5:4-5](#)

[James 4:7](#)

Write out **1 Corinthians 10:13** from memory

Application of 1 Corinthians 10:13

What is a temptation that frequently overcomes you?

What “way of escape” does God give you?

The Tactics of Temptation by Dr. Curtis C. Mitchell

New Christians sometimes think life will be free from temptation and hassles. But **Ephesians 6:12** says, “...our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers...” We are up against a highly organized enemy that has strategy, tactics, and battle plans. Christians must not go up against an organized enemy in a completely disorganized manner. There are different kinds of temptations, and different ways to handle them. God outlines these things in the Bible.

In a battle there are two factors involved. These are power and strategy. Both are important. The Christian must utilize the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. However, even with adequate power, victory is not necessarily assured. You must use the power in the right way at the right time. That's tactics — that's strategy.

For example: Let's imagine an admiral on a battleship with all kinds of power at his disposal. He is attacked by an airplane and gives an order: "Okay, men, throw over the depth charges." He would be defeated! Because depth charges don't do anything against airplanes. They are designed to destroy submarines. Now in that case his defeat would not be due to a lack of power, but a failure in strategy.

There are different kinds of temptations and there are different ways that God says to handle these temptations.

When entering a battle, a good general wants to know two basic things. He wants to know what the enemy is going to throw at him, and he wants to know where he is vulnerable. So let's take up first of all the source of temptation. What is the enemy going to throw at us?

The ultimate source of all evil is Satan, the devil. But that doesn't mean that the devil always attacks us personally, it would be like saying that Hitler was behind all German aggression in World War II. That statement is true, but it doesn't mean that Hitler always attacked each G.I. personally. Through his submarines and his German Panzer divisions Hitler came at us in various ways. By the same token, **the devil comes at us through three basic channels. In Scripture these are called: The devil, the world and the flesh.**

So let's understand the enemy. Probably the easiest of the three to understand would be the **devil**. Scripture teaches that there is one personal supernatural spirit being known as the devil or Satan and there are many fallen angels known as the devil's angels, or demons.

The second channel through which the enemy can attack is the **world**. The kind of world we are talking about is the one mentioned in **1 John 2:15, "Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him."** Or **Romans 12:2 "And do not be conformed to this world..."** This kind of world means: the world of unsaved men and the society, culture, and value systems that they have established .

The most subtle kinds of temptations we deal with are from this channel — the world! Most of the time when you are tempted by the world, you are not tempted to do anything illegal or nasty; yet, it is devastating to your spiritual welfare.

For example: A young couple is very zealous for the Lord and then suddenly stop attending church. They purchased a new home and are now so busy landscaping it they have no time for God. They actually love the house more than they love God. That is sin and idolatry! The most difficult type of temptation comes from the **world**.

The final channel of temptation is the **flesh**. The kind of flesh we are talking about is the kind referred to in **Galatians 5:17**, "For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please." The **flesh** is also referred to as the "old Man" in **Romans 6**; in **Romans 7** as "the sin that is in me"; and in **Romans 8**, it is called the "carnal man." This is referring to your old sin nature, that inborn selfishness and rebellion. You've got an enemy right on the inside. A traitor within the ranks of your own personality through which Satan can operate.

We have a battle on our hands. We must face this evil triad - the world, and flesh and the devil — every day.

But we also want to know where we are vulnerable. In **1 Thessalonians 5:23** we read, "Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." The whole man involves the spirit, soul and body. Any temptation you have will be in one of these areas.

The easiest to understand is the body. That is the material in you: the meat, the bones, the eyeballs. Some temptations are directed right at the biological drives of the body such as sex or eating. A Christian is constantly tempted to misuse and misdirect these biological drives that God has given us.

The word soul as used in specialized sense in contrast to the spirit means, essentially, the self-consciousness. That capacity that you have to say, "I" . You are aware of yourself in relationship to your environment. Many temptations are directed right at your self-consciousness, because involved in that self-consciousness is this thing called pride or ego!

Man was created to not only be aware of himself, but also to be aware of God! So let's call the spirit the God-consciousness." Man uniquely has a capacity for God. Some temptation is directed right at your relationship with God. When you are tempted to deny God's goodness, or to deny God's Word, or God's faithfulness, these are attacks right at your God-consciousness (spirit).

As you study the Bible, you'll find that the world generally attacks you in the area of your soul. Why do you want more money or things money can buy? All too often it is because of ego. A direct demonic attack will be in the area of the spirit - the God-consciousness, causing you to doubt. When you are attacked in the area of the body, it will usually be coming from the old sin nature, the flesh.

- Type A - **Devil** -> Spirit
- Type B - **World** -> Soul
- Type C - **Flesh** -> Body

These are the three basic types of temptation. The devil attacks the God-consciousness or the spirit. The world attacks your self-consciousness or the soul. The old sin nature, the flesh, attacks the appetites of the body. It is crucial, when you are being tempted, to determine what kind of temptation it is. Each is handled differently.

Look at three temptations in the Bible and identify each temptation as to basic type. In **Genesis 13:5-11**, we are dealing with type world temptation. The Type B (**World**) was attacking the ego of Lot, who was concerned with personal gain.

In **2 Samuel 11:1-2**, it is Type C (**Flesh**) where David's appetites of the body were under attack. In **Luke 22:54-57**, the basic thrust of the temptation was right at Peter's relationship with God. In this Type A (**Devil**) temptation, Satan is attacking Peter's spirit or God-consciousness.

The question is, "How do I handle these different types of temptation?" What does the Bible say to do about it? Probably Type B (**World**) type will be the most prominent over the period of your life span: the world attacking the ego. This is true particularly in our materialistic society.

Suppose as a woman you find yourself enamored with the latest fashions. It becomes an inordinate passion that's ever on your mind. Clothes! Clothes! Clothes! Or a fellow gets car fever. Cars! Cars! Cars! How do we handle it?

In **1 John 2:15** we read, "**Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.**" If you begin

to let your love for God grow cold, then the world will slip into the vacuum. So, if you find yourself loving the world inordinately, that is a symptom of a deeper problem. Don't fight the symptom; let the symptom warn you of the real problem, and your real problem is that something has happened to your love for God. Check out your devotional life. Get alone with Him and start really having a time with Him. Get that love back where it ought to be and the whole problem will disappear.

If you love Him as you ought to love Him, you won't be loving this world. The more you love Him the less important the things of this world will become to you. It is absolutely crucial in maintaining a successful Christian life to take time every day to communicate with Him through personal Bible study and prayer. So when tempted with the Type B ([World](#)), check out your devotional life.

In the Type C ([Flesh](#)) attacks the appetites of the body. The big issue in that type of temptation is sex, particularly in our culture. Suppose a college student and his date realize they are getting tempted. They decide how they will handle it. That evening they are going to gather algae off the rocks at the beach for their biology class. If they get tempted down there on that lonely beach, they already decided they will kneel down on the spot and pray and ask God to help them fight this thing. Now that sounds very pious, but that's very stupid! That's like sticking your head in the lion's mouth and asking God to help it not bite you.

Look at [2 Timothy 2:22](#), "Flee....youthful lusts." Or [1 Corinthians 6:18](#), "Flee immorality." That's the tactic to use: You are never told to fight but to flee! Joseph is a good sample of this in [Genesis 39](#). When Potiphar's wife tried to seduce him, did Joseph suggest they kneel by the couch and pray about it? No! He ran!

There are different ways to run. Structuring dates at places with lots of bright lights and lots of people is one way of running. If a secretary bats her false eyelashes at her boss and seductively suggests they meet back at the office that evening to catch up on their work, the man can invite his mother-in-law to accompany him to the office. That is running from the situation. If one has an appetite for doughnuts, don't stand there looking at them; don't even drive close to the doughnut shop. That's running also.

How does one handle type A: direct demonic attack upon the God-consciousness? **James 4:7** says, "**Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.**" How does one resist the devil? There is no better way to resist the devil than the way Jesus Christ handled a direct satanic overture. Each time He used the same tactical maneuver. "**It is written.**" "**It is written.**" He hit him over the head with the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God. He threw Scripture in his teeth. That is the best way to resist the devil.

With type A Temptation, we are supposed to resist in the power of the Spirit, by using the Word of God. For instance, if Satan tries to tell a new convert that he is not saved, the best thing to do is have a passage that states categorically that all who believe in Christ have everlasting life. Throw a verse like **John 5:24** in the enemy's face. Or if you are tempted to doubt God's goodness, the best thing to do is throw the promises of God in the teeth of the devil.

Thus, to effectively handle this kind of temptation, **you must know your Bible**. That is why Scripture memorization is so important. David said, "**Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.**" (**Psalm 119:11**). The more you hide God's Word in your heart, the more you study this Book and master it, the more you will be prepared to deal effectively with this type of temptation.

In conclusion, when tempted by the devil in the area of your God-consciousness, resist with the Word.

When tempted by the world in the area of your ego, check out your devotional love for Him. That's where the real problem lies.

When tempted by the flesh, in the biological drives of the body, run, baby run! Needless to say, all of these tactical maneuvers must be carried out by utilizing the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

This diagram shows the way temptation moves in our lives from C to B to A as we get older.

ABC of Sin	Involvement of Sin	Biblical Example of Sin	Strategy to Defeat Sin
Devil (Old Age)	Spirit	Luke 22:54-57	Resist (James 4:7)
World (Maturity)	Soul	Genesis 13:5-6	Check out love life (1 John 2:15)
Flesh (Youth)	Body	2 Samuel 11:1	Flee (2 Timothy 2:22)