

1 Corinthians 10:13 — What Does The Bible Say About Temptation?

June 19, 2022

Good morning CrossWinds! Welcome to a new series for the summer. The title of the series is, “What Does The Bible Say?” We are looking at what the Bible says about a variety of topics. This morning we are looking at what the Bible says about temptation. Temptation is something that all of us experience. Not a day goes by when we are not tempted in one form or another. Temptation hits us as soon as we turn on our phones and computers. It is just there on the Internet, right in front of us. When we give in to temptation, we are filled with shame, self-hatred, and regret. Paul wrote about the daily battle we face in Romans 7.

For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. Romans 7:19 (ESV)

I think all of us can say a hearty “Amen” to Paul’s words. That is our lives. That is why I am thankful we can talk about the topic of temptation this morning.

My prep for this message didn’t come together as I expected. This week, I realized the Bible has a lot to say about temptation. There is no way I can package all I want to say into a single sermon. To help limit things a bit, I decided to make this message about just one verse. It is a verse I memorized when I was in sixth grade. It is a verse I have quoted to myself thousands of times in my battles with temptation and sin. Since this verse has proven so helpful to me, I hope an entire message on this verse will be helpful for you.

I memorized this verse when I was young. If you haven't memorized this verse, that is your homework assignment from this morning's message.

Memorize the verse we are about to look at this morning.

When Jesus was contending with Satan's temptations in the wilderness, every time Satan sent a temptation Jesus' way, Jesus counted Satan's lies by quoting Bible verses that contained the truth. If Jesus memorized Bible verses that he could quote to fend off Satan's temptations and lies, we should learn from Jesus and do the same.

One of the most important verses to memorize for our battles with temptation and sin is the one we are looking at this morning. What is that verse? It is 1 Corinthians 10:13. It is on the top of your outline. Let's read it together then study it so we can see what we can learn from it.

No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it. 1 Corinthians 10:13 (ESV)

As Christians, no temptation is so powerful, Satan is not so effective that he can hit us with a temptation where we must sin. God has always promised to give us the ability to say, "No." He always promises to protect us from being overwhelmed by sin. God promises to always provide a way of escape. Let's break apart 1 Corinthians 10:13 to study it.

1. Realize temptation wants to take over my life.

No temptation has overtaken you...

Temptation by nature wants to take us over. Temptation wants to dominate us. It wants to ruin us. It wants to conquer us like what Russia is trying to accomplish in Ukraine. When we think of temptation, it is always a bad thing.

If we go to the Greek language, we get a different perspective. The Greek word behind our English word temptation is *perismos*. It is sometimes translated in our Bibles as the word temptation, but in other parts of our Bible, it is translated with the word test or a trial. What we find is tests or trials in our lives are one side of a coin and are intended to have a positive outcome. Temptations are the other side of the same coin but have a potentially negative outcome.

Life is full of tests and trials. Every test or trial in life has the possibility that we handle that situation well and pass the test with good results. Every test and trial in life also has the possibility that we handle it poorly so it turns into a temptation that leads us to sin. The same difficult situation in life can be tipped in a positive direction or a negative direction. Let me give you an example to better explain this concept.

Imagine you were hired as a new employee at one of our local banks. The boss asks you to stay late to close the bank after everyone has gone. Before you go home, you look at your desk and there is a big pile of money on the desk. You have no idea who put it there. You know it is not from the tellers. It is loose cash. You are not sure what to do with the money. You could certainly use some of it. Rather than take any of it, you lock it in your desk. The next morning, as soon as the bank opens, you head to your boss' office to tell him what you found and give him the cash. Your boss takes the money, counts it and then turns to you and

says, "Congratulations, you passed the test! As a new employee, I wanted to know if I could trust you so I tested you."

Experiencing that test and passing the test was a good thing. It built your boss' confidence in you as an employee. That same test could have gone south. It could have turned into a serious temptation that led you to sin and steal the cash. If that happened, you would have lost your job.

Do you see how the same difficult situation can turn in a good direction when we pass the test or the trial or it can turn in a negative direction if we let it turn into a temptation to sin and we give in to that sin?

What I described in our imaginary bank scenarios happens all the time in the Bible. God put people through tests and trials to reveal their character.

[After these things God tested Abraham... Genesis 22:1 \(ESV\)](#)

The test in Genesis 22 was to see if Abraham would obey God and sacrifice his son, which is what God told him to do. This was a test intended to reveal Abraham's character, but it also possessed the possibility of temptation and sin. Remember God's purpose in the test was to reveal Abraham's faith, not to tempt Abraham's faith and lead him to sin.

[Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. 1 Peter 4:12 \(ESV\)](#)

Peter told us to expect trials and difficult circumstances to come into our lives. They are the way God tests our faith. Our faith is revealed and demonstrated in the difficult times much better than in the easy times. We should expect God will allow challenging seasons into our lives for that purpose.

Sometimes God uses tests and trials in our lives not just to reveal our faith but to mature and improve our faith. Look at these verses from Psalm 119 that tell us the good ways God uses trials and tests in the life of the Psalmist.

Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep your word. Psalm 119:67 (ESV)

The Psalmist said it was the difficult times, tests, and trials that God used to get him looking at his sin, confessing his sin and giving him a hunger to obey God's Word. God used trials in his life to give him a love for obeying God's Word.

It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn your statutes. Psalm 119:71 (ESV)

In this verse, the Psalmist said God used the trials and tests in his life to help him open his Bible and better learn God's Word. I think all of us know the experience of drifting away from the Bible, but when trouble or trials come our way we open the Word again and seek God through his book. God uses trials and tests to mature us.

Satan wants to take the same tests and trials we face that God intends to prove and improve our faith and turn them into temptations that erode our faith.

In our English Bibles many times when we see the word test, trial, or temptation it is translating the same Greek word. The word *perismos*. What matters is how the test and difficulties in life are handled. If we handle them well, God is using them for a positive purpose, to prove and improve our faith. If we handle them poorly and let them lead us to temptation and sin, Satan is using them to eroded our faith.

What kind of tests and trials can God send our way? All kinds. Let me give you a very current example. Has anyone noticed the price at the gas pump is

going higher? Has anyone noticed the price of food is going up? What is one thing that is not going up? Our paychecks! For many people, these are financially tight times. This is an opportunity for people to cut back, live on less, pray more and trust God to provide for our needs. We are facing financial trials and tests that God has allowed for the purpose of proving and improving our faith. The financial tests we face should get us on our knees more and help us to pray harder. They should give us experiences where God answers our prayers for finances and our faith is built.

Satan wants to turn the financially stressful times we are facing into a temptation where we give in to sin. He wants us to stop giving to our church. He wants us to pad our expense reports and add extra mileage we did not drive. He wants us to not honestly report all our income on our taxes. After all, the government doesn't need more of my money anyway. Do you see how the same test in our lives that God has allowed to build us up can become a temptation that tears us down?

When it comes to the Greek word *perismos* being translated either positively or negatively depending on the context, James 1 gives us a great example. Initially, this word is translated as trials and shows us the positive potential of the challenges of life, then a few verses later the same Greek word is translated as temptation, which shows us the potential negative side of the challenges of life. Let me show you. We will look at the positive side first.

Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. James 1:2-4 (ESV)

James said when we are in a tough season of life God intends to use that tough season to mature us, make us steadfast, and make us mature and complete in Christ so we become more like Jesus over time as God uses the trials of life to address sin and shortcomings in our character.

Maybe you are new parents. You are exhausted. You don't get much sleep at night with your newborn. As you are going through that trial, you are constantly asking God for more help and more energy. At the same time, you are becoming less selfish. You are growing in your love for others. The tough times you are facing as new parents are being used by Jesus to refine and mature you. Do you see why we should be thankful for the hard seasons in life, not run from them?

Like you, I don't like the trials. I certainly am not asking for more trials. If God decided to send them my way, I know he has a good reason for sending them. He has a good purpose for me to experience them. His plans are for me to prove and improve my faith while I am in them. So while I don't like trials, I can still have joy in them because of what I know God will do through them in me.

James continued and used the same Greek word *perismos*, but a few verses later he used it from a negative angle.

Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. James 1:13 (ESV)

Instead of trusting in God during tough times, it is easy to let life's trials turn into temptations to sin. This is what Satan wants to happen in our lives.

Maybe the trial is you sent in your quarterly tax payment but at the end of the year, you discover the state has no record of your payment. You know you can straighten things out with the IRS, but the headache and the hassle involved

will be a nightmare. As you think about this, you decide to call the IRS and get an agent on the phone. You are going to give them a piece of your mind and let them know how angry you are for their complete incompetence.

Wait! Don't go there. Did you see it happen? God allowed the difficulty with the IRS into your life as a way to prove and improve your faith, but in your anger at the headache, it started to become a temptation to sin as you contemplated giving the IRS agent a piece of your mind. Do you see how difficulties God allowed for good can quickly be turned into temptations to sin?

While God may allow trials in our lives, he is never the source of the temptation to sin that we experience. James continued and told us where temptations we experience comes from.

**But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire.
James 1:14 (ESV)**

This is a very helpful verse. The way a trial turns into a temptation is we lure and entice ourselves. This is a fishing term. The hard-core fishermen will know this better than me but the word refers to the way a fish talks itself into biting the hook. The worm is on the end of the hook and the fisherman is tangling the worm up and down in front of the fish's mouth. The fish is no dummy. It sees the hook. It sees the line. It sees the fisherman. The problem is the longer it looks at the yummy bait that is dangled in front of it, the more it talks itself into biting the bait even though it sees the hook!

The same thing happens to us. We face difficult circumstances and the thought comes across our minds to complain. We start to think of how long we work and how hard we work and how it feels unfair because we work longer and

harder than others. Soon words are coming out of our mouths that do not build people up. We are whiners and complainers and we talked ourselves into being that way.

Tough times turn into temptations to sin based on what we do with our minds and thoughts. When a tough situation hits us or an enticing situation comes our way, what will we do with it in our minds? Will we roll it around in our thoughts? Will we begin to fantasize about what it might be like to give people a piece of our minds? The longer we do that, like a fish talking himself into biting a hook, we talk ourselves into sin. We know what we are thinking about is not good. We know it dare not take place. We have the opportunity to bring glory to God by turning away from sin and by doing the right thing, but so many times instead of changing the channel in our thought lives to something good, wholesome, and true, we continue to entice ourselves to sin.

This tells us something very important. Trials in life come from outside of us. Temptation is how we choose to respond to those trials inside of us. Temptation is what we allow our imaginations to chew on. If we choose to think impure thoughts, the harvest will be impure actions. Beating temptation is all about what we choose to think about in our minds.

This brings me to an important topic. It is the media and movies of our day. There is so much trash in movies. So many are “R” rated. There is a ton of mental trash on the Internet. There are so many movies filled with death, torture, extramarital sex, and greed. There is so much trash on Youtube. The news

networks are so negative. You guys know what I am talking about. If we feed that stuff into our brains day in and day out, it sets us up for sin.

I will get on one of my little soap boxes. When Salvadore Ramos shot the children at the school in Uvalde, Texas, many people in our nation reacted by thinking the answer is stricter gun laws. I want to suggest a different answer. Get rid of violent, role-playing video games. Salvadore Ramos, like many other young school shooters, was an avid video game player. The video games he played were violent graphic mass murder killing sprees, virtual situations similar to what literally happened in the Uvalde school system. Salvadore's favorite video game was "Dead by Daylight." On its website, the creator of the game describes it as a multiplayer survival horror action game. It was after losing at "Dead by Daylight" video game on a group chat with his friends that Salvadore first threatened to carry out the video game's massacres in real life.¹

My simple point is that since he spent hundreds of hours role-playing and fantasizing about killing people in his mind, that made it much easier to carry out killing people in real life. We know this is true. This is the way the U.S. military trains its soldiers. Soldiers simulate attacks and war on what is essentially giant video games before trying the missions in real life. If the U.S. military uses role-playing video games to prepare soldiers to kill people, it should not be surprising to see a junior high student who plays the same kind of video games eager to carry out mass murder in real life.

¹ <https://nypost.com/2022/05/26/salvador-ramos-mightve-revealed-shooting-plan-reporttexas-shooter-may-have-revealed-sick-massacre-plan-in-video-game-rant-report/>

The key to beating temptation is how we respond to the trials of life in our minds. What we allow ourselves to think about matters. If we entertain ourselves with sinful responses to hard times, we will be that much more predisposed to carry out sinful responses to hard times. We dare not role-play a sinful response in our minds if we don't want to carry it out in our lives.

We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ... 2 Corinthians 10:5 (ESV)

The key to beating temptation begins with saying, "Is this thought pleasing to Christ?" If not, I should not be thinking it. I need to do something else beside think thoughts that are not pleasing to Jesus and fantasize about things that should never be done.

Let me get real practical. Like most of you, I have experienced very hurtful situations in life when people have said and done things that were devastating to me and my family. Like you, I have been through those dark nights of the soul when I can't sleep and my mind is thinking of all the things I would like to say and do to that person to get even.

The Bible says to be careful in those times. God has allowed that trial in my life as an opportunity to prove and improve my faith. In those trials, we cannot allow our minds to fantasize about all the hurtful or nasty things we would like to say and do to people that hurt us. That turns a trial God intends for our good to build up our faith into a temptation that will lead us to sin.

What does the Bible say we must do with our minds?

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Philippians 4:8 (ESV)

This changes the music we listen to. This changes the videos we watch. This changes what social media we engage in. Paul was adamant. If we are going to please God and take every thought captive for Christ we must only put good things, not garbage, into our minds. When we find our minds going down the rabbit hole of garbage, we need to rebuke ourselves, repent of it, and turn away before we lure ourselves into sin like a fish talks itself into biting the hook.

[You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you. Isaiah 26:3 \(ESV\)](#)

If we want peace in our hearts, the way to get it is to not allow our difficulties to turn into temptations. We want to fix our eyes on Jesus, how much God loves us, what Jesus has done for us, and how we are the most blessed beings in the universe. We deserve hell, but by the grace of Jesus, he offers us heaven. When we fix our eyes on Jesus, God gives us peace when our minds stay on him.

What do we do with our minds instead of thinking trashy thoughts, whining, complaining, and grumbling? We feed our minds only things that are good, wholesome and true, and we fix our thoughts on Jesus and what God has done for us through him.

Trials and hard times in life and temptation to sin are two sides of the same coin. Satan wants to turn the trials into temptations to sin that he wants to use to ruin us. God permits the trials in our lives to prove and improve our faith. The key to passing the tests and our trials of life is to guard our minds. We must fix our thoughts on Jesus and things that are wholesome, good, and true. In the trials of life if we feed our minds filthy fantasy through video or entertainment that

we use to fill our minds with unwholesome thoughts, like a fish talking itself into biting a lure, we will talk ourselves into sin.

2. God promises I am not alone in my temptations.

...no temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man...

Temptation is a human thing. Everybody goes through temptation. The way Satan wants you to experience temptation is to think you are the only one facing it. He wants you to think you are alone and there is no way out of temptation other than giving in. What we need to know is the same temptations we face are faced by many other Christians every day and they successfully turn away from them. The temptations Satan wants us to think are special to us are really common to all. The temptations Satan wants us to think no one has conquered are conquered every day by ordinary Christians like you and me.

Let me tell you a bit about my personality. I am competitive, especially in sports. I like to exercise with people who are stronger, faster, and in better shape than I am. The reason I do that is because I say, "If they can do it, I can do it too." That helps me to push myself so I exercise harder and exercise longer.

I use this competitive side to get myself to do all kinds of stuff I don't want to do. For example, I do not like roller coasters. I do not like heights. When I was a youth pastor, the worst day of the year was when the youth group took its annual summer trip to Cedar Point, an amusement park in Ohio. It is a huge park, one of the nation's biggest. The kids loved it! I hated it. Since I can't stand roller coasters the kids in the youth group wanted me to ride them, "Put Kurt in the front car!" It was torture. I tried to keep my eyes closed. The only way I could

do it was to tell myself that thousands of people rode the same ride before me. If they survived, I would make it out alive too.

Paul said we need to tell ourselves the same thing when facing temptation. The temptations we are facing were faced successfully by many hundreds of other Christians before us. Temptation is common to man, not just special to you.

Imagine you are in college and the class is really hard. It is time for the final exam and your friend has a copy of last year's final. The problem is the class syllabus specifically says you are not allowed to look at exams from previous years. You know if you don't look at the exam, your friend will get a better grade than you because he cheated. Your grade will probably be low enough that your GPA will fall. You are tempted to look at that old exam. You are pressured to look at the old exam. It seems like everybody else in the class is looking at old exams.

This is a test in life. How do we not let this become a temptation that leads us to sin? We remind ourselves that the temptation to cheat and look at old exams isn't new. There are a lot of other Christians around us that will choose to not cheat on that test. God will take care of them. God will get them where he wants them to be in life, and they don't need to cheat on a final exam to get there. If other Christians are not cheating and know they can trust God to take care of their futures, we can do the same thing. If they did the right thing, I can do the right thing.

I don't know about you but when I am tempted in an area knowing there are other Christians around me who have faced the same temptation but have not given in to it encourages me to press on in faithfulness.

3. God promises to limit the temptations I face.

...God will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able...

This is super important. God knows each of us as an individual. God promises he will never allow us to face a trial or temptation that is more than we can successfully handle at any given moment in our lives.

One example of this is Job. In the book of Job, when Satan wanted to bring trials into Job's life, he had to ask permission from God to bring those trials into Job's life. Then God limited the extent of the trials Job faced.

And the Lord said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your hand. Only against him do not stretch out your hand." So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord. Job 1:12 (ESV)

It is comforting to know that when Satan desired to bring trouble into Job's life, he had to get God's permission before he did a thing. If God limited Job's trials in his life and if God had a good purpose for the trials in Job's life, we can be confident that God will also limit the trials in our lives and have a good purpose for us in them when he allows them.

We see the same thing happening in John 18. When the soldiers came to the Garden to arrest Jesus, Jesus asked, "Whom do you seek?" They said, "Jesus of Nazareth." Then Jesus said, "I am he." Look what John said after that.

So he asked them again, "Whom do you seek?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus answered, "I told you that I am he. So, if you seek me, let these men go." This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken: "Of those whom you gave me I have lost not one." John 18:7-9 (ESV)

The implication is that if any one of the disciples had been taken captive at that moment they would have been too weak in their faith to sustain the trial of Jesus' arrest. It would have turned overwhelmed them so Jesus made sure he protected them.

Some of you will say, I know what the Bible says about God limiting the temptations I face so they are not more than I can handle, but experience tells me different. I have faced temptations that were just too strong. I couldn't resist the temptation. I had to give in to the temptation.

Let me explain something. God will not allow us to face a temptation that is more than we can handle, but we can choose to continue to entice ourselves, and just like a fish talking itself into biting a hook, we can talk ourselves into temptations so they become too hard to resist. When a temptation first hits, that is when we always have the ability to resist the temptation with God's strength. That is when we know the temptation is a test and is limited by God in severity. If we choose to continually entice or entertain ourselves with the temptation, we are moving away from the limitations of God's protection and slowly stepping into sin by our own choosing.

Let me give you an example. Imagine you are someone who struggles with drinking. You have sworn off alcohol because it has become an addictive habit in your life. God will not tempt you with alcohol more than you can resist with the Holy Spirit's strength in your life. For example, you may be at your friend's house watching football and they break out the beer during the game. At that moment, you can resist and stick with a Diet Coke. But as the day wears on

and your friends invite you to finish the night with them in the bar and you know they won't get home until 2 a.m., that is not a good thing. By sitting in the temptation you are enticing yourself with the temptation. Before you know it you are back to pounding brewskies.

Isn't this the way it works with porn on the Internet? Statistics say that most of the men in this room struggle with Internet porn. You are on the web and an enticing window pops up. In that moment, the temptation is limited by God. You can close the browser window and move on. You may need to also walk away from the computer and put down your cell phone. In that moment the temptation is limited and not more than you can handle. What do we often do? Let me click a little bit. Let me look at one more picture. Let me look at another picture. Soon it is click, click, click, click... We wonder why sin is so hard to resist 25 clicks deep into porn. We lured and enticed ourselves into sin so the temptation overtook us. God designs his way of escape at the beginning of the temptation, not after 50 clicks into sin.

4. God promises to provide a way out of temptation.

...with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it. 1 Corinthians 10:13 (ESV)

God promises to always provide an escape hatch in the trials and temptations we face. There will always be a way out of trials or temptations. What does the escape hatch look like? The answer is a little complicated so let me break it down. The escape hatch is different depending on what is happening in the difficult time.

A. **Often the way of escape in my trials is to endure them.** Remember the word for a trial or temptation is the same word in Greek. Sometimes God brings trials into our lives for the purpose of maturing us, for the purpose of getting us back on our knees, for the purpose of getting us to open our Bibles again. When we face difficult circumstances, or the need to work with difficult people, often the way of escape in those kinds of trials is not to run from them. It is to endure them. It is to stay right where you are. God wants us to endure and let them do the good work of maturing our faith. This is what James was saying in James 1:4. Let's look at it in the Message translation.

So don't try to get out of anything prematurely. Let it do its work so you become mature and well-developed, not deficient in any way. James 1:4 (The Message)

One way to think about these kinds of trials is they are similar to exercise. I am part of an exercise class on Tuesday nights at the YMCA. Adelee Dixon from CrossWinds runs it. A number of people in the church are part of it. It is 6 p.m. Tuesdays for those who are interested. Adelee writes on the marker board the workout for the night. It might be 20 kettlebell swings, 30 ball slams, 40 push-ups, and 50 air squats. Do the circuit three times. Let me tell you, her workouts are not easy! They are tough. As soon as the workout hurts, should I walk out the door and head for the showers? Absolutely not! The only way to improve in athletics is to bear up under the pain and endure the trial knowing it will improve me and it will come to an end. Just like a workout program will come to an end and I will be grateful I went through it, the trials God allows into my life will come to an end. They will mature me

and make me stronger in Christ. I probably won't want to repeat them but I will be thankful I went through them.

Paul wrote in Romans how God uses difficult circumstances such as a tough marriage or a tough relationship or a tough job to mature us.

Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame... Romans 5:3–5 (ESV)

B. Often the way of escape from my temptations is to run from them.

Not all trials should be endured. There are some trials that quickly turn into temptations to sin on the inside and we are to run from them, not endure them. Sexual trials are examples of trials that we should run from.

Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. 1 Corinthians 6:18 (ESV)

When we are tempted sexually, we are to run from that kind of temptation, not to endure and entertain those kinds of temptations. When David was on his roof and saw a naked Bathsheba bathing in her hot tub, the right thing for him to do was to run from looking at her, not to continue looking at her. When he continued in that trial it quickly turned into a temptation to sin. As he continued in that trial, he talked himself into an adulterous relationship like a fish talking itself into biting a hook.

Another example of this is Samson. When Samson started spending time with Delilah, it was not a good thing. She was a Philistine. He was an Israelite. There was no way the relationship could move forward. But Samson knew he was strong, so strong that nothing could stop him. If a hundred of men couldn't stop Samson, how could a cute little Philistine

woman harm him? The name Delilah in Hebrew means delicate. Some Hebrew dictionaries point out that her name means thin. The picture is their relationship was that it was a case of opposites attract. A super-strong Samson that looked like the Hulk without green paint was attracted to a thin, delicate woman. If no man could hurt him, what could a delicate, thin woman do to him? He could certainly endure the temptation.

She continued to sexually entice him and tempt him about what was the source of his strength. She badgered him. She cried in front of him. He thought he was strong enough to resist her seductions, but he eventually gave in to her seductions. One brief haircut later, it was all over. Samson was destroyed by a thin, delicate woman. He should never have tried enduring that test. He should have run from it before it became a temptation to sin that he was so deep into he couldn't resist.

Let me give you an extra thought on sexual temptation. Samson, who was the strongest man in the world, was destroyed by sexual sin. Solomon, who was the wisest man in the world, was destroyed by sexual sin. It doesn't matter how strong you are or how smart you are, if you negotiate with sexual sin and dabble in sexual sin you will talk yourself into sexual sin. It always works that way.

Conclusion

This morning, if you don't know 1 Corinthians 10:13 by heart, my challenge is for you to memorize it. That way when you find yourself enticed with temptation you can quote the truth of God's Word to fend off Satan's lies, just like

Jesus did when he was tempted by Satan in the desert. What is the truth in 1 Corinthians 10:13 that we need to remember?

1. Satan wants to use temptation to overtake us and destroy us. God's intent when he allows hard times in our lives is he wants to use them to prove and improve our faith. It is when we internalize the tough times and begin thinking about them the wrong way that we lead ourselves deeper and deeper into sin. The key to beating temptation is what we do with our minds. If we feed our minds with sinful thoughts or we allow our minds to imaginatively churn out sinful responses to hurtful things done to us, we will lead ourselves into sin. Like a fish talking itself into biting a hook, we will talk ourselves into sin. We must only allow ourselves to think about things that are good, wholesome, and true. We must fix our thoughts on Jesus and what God has done for us through him.
2. We must remember that the temptations we face are common to man, not special to us. Other Christians before us have successfully turned away from the very same temptations to sin that we face. If they did it, we can do it too.
3. We must remember that the temptations we face are limited by God so they are not more than we can handle. God never sets us up for failure. He sets us up for success. A temptation becomes too hard to resist when instead of turning away from temptation we continually entice ourselves with the temptation like a fish talking itself into biting a hook.
4. We must remember that God always provides a way of escape. If the difficult time is a trial or test in life, it is God's will that we endure it knowing that the

hard time in life will come to an end. God is using that hard time to make us mature and complete in Jesus. Some hard times quickly lead to temptations, such as sexual temptations. In that case, it is always God's will that we don't endure those kinds of temptations but that we flee from them.



Dr. Kurt Trucksess is ordained in the Evangelical Free Church of America. He enjoys reading, writing, and time with his family. Feel free to contact him at www.Christ2RCulture.com (www.c2rc.com)

© You are permitted and encouraged to reproduce and distribute this material in any format provided (1) you credit the author, (2) modifications are clearly marked, (3) you do not charge a fee beyond the cost of reproduction, (4) you include the web address (www.Christ2RCulture.com) on the copied resource.

