

Temptation

Remember to fill in the Bible references before coming to the study



All human beings are tempted to do wrong. What is more, we all have a bias towards wrongdoing this is what the Bible means by our sinful nature. This sad fact is not altered by our Christian conversion, though we *are given* a new desire to please God and new strength for the fight. We should realise, from the outset, that there is a battle to be fought against the world, the flesh (our sinful natures) and the Devil.

1. IT IS NOT A SIN TO BE TEMPTED

We should distinguish between sin and temptation to sin. We sin when we yield to temptation: **look up James 1:14-15**

.....
.....

Even Jesus, our pure and holy Saviour, was tempted to sin. He will give us help when it is needed: **look up Hebrews 4:15-16**

.....
.....
.....

2. COPING WITH TEMPTATION

Let us be honest: when we yield to temptation, it is because we choose to do so. This fact should keep us humble. There is no reason why we should give way under temptation. We are not the only ones tempted, and God always provides an escape route: **look up 1 Corinthians 10:13**

.....
.....

Having persuaded us to sin, the Devil tells us we are a hopeless case a total failure as a Christian. Without excusing our sin, we should keep in mind that we are still sinners, and will be till we die. We should also remember that God is rich in mercy when we confess our failure (1 John 1:8-9) and that Jesus speaks up for us: **look up 1 John 2:1**

.....
.....

Now that we are Christians we cannot be content to sin. As we grow in love for the Lord, we find ourselves wanting to be delivered from the effects of sin in the world and the power of sin in our lives. We can appreciate Paul's struggle: **look up Romans 7:23-24**

.....
.....

While we remain in this world, we must resist temptation with all our strength. Having joined the Lord's army we should fight on His side. But can we resist temptation? If so, how?

3. WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW TO FIGHT TEMPTATION

a) Know the world, It is not as innocent as it seems: **look up 1 John 2:16**

.....
.....

b) Know yourself (the flesh). We are not as strong as we think we are: **look up Luke 22:33-34**

.....
.....

c) Know your enemy (the Devil): **look up 2 Corinthians 2:11**

.....
.....

The Devil is cunning - he sometimes appears as "an Angel of Light": **look up 2 Corinthians 11:14**

.....

.....

d) Know your Bible. This will help you to know yourself and the Devil. It will also tell you of the grace of God, and give you more encouragement and practical advice than anything else. Familiarity with God's Word will help you in the fight against sin: **look up Psalm 119:9**

.....

.....

Jesus used the Word of God to fight the Tempter (**Matthew 4:10-11**).

4. STRATEGIES IN THE FIGHT AGAINST TEMPTATION

a) Be watchful. We need to be mentally alert if we are to overcome temptation: **look up Mark 14:38**

.....

.....

b) Be prayerful (**Mark 14:38** again). Since Jesus is more powerful than the Devil, it is only sensible to ask for His help and to stay close to Him: **look up Hebrews 2:18**

.....

.....

c) Fill your mind with pure things. Do not dwell on things that are sinful and sordid: **look up Philippians 4:8**

.....

.....

d) Run away from temptation! This is wise, not cowardly - and God commands it: **look up 2 Timothy 2:22**

.....

.....

e) Resist the Tempter. A straightforward principle - but difficult to put into practice. We often have to grit our teeth and simply say "No" to the Devil's suggestions: **look up James 4:7**

.....

.....

Seek the strength of fellowship as even our Lord did from His disciples in the face of severe temptation (see **Matthew 26:36-38**).

CONCLUSION

An old proverb says "You can't stop birds flying over your head, but you can prevent them building nests in your hair". We cannot get beyond the reach of temptations but we can prevent ourselves being overcome by them. Finally, remember that you will only be perfect in Heaven!