

STUDIES IN TEMPTATION

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Submitted to Dr. Abramson as a mentoring research assignment, Fiji, 1997-98

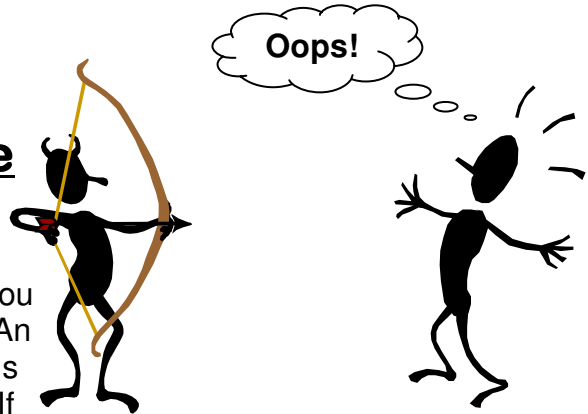
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Lesson Three

Setting Yourself Up To Be Tempted

Many times temptation comes against you because you place yourself in its way! An essential part of overcoming temptations is to do your best to stay out of their paths. If

you are tempted to look at pornography, then do not go into places where there is pornography for sale! If God has put it on your heart to loose weight, do not enter a bakery where they sell sweets! This is not an easy thing to do, but if you apply yourself to it you will find that it becomes easier and easier as time goes by.



(Romans 13:14 NKJV) *“But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.”*

Make no provision or provide any strength for the flesh to work with. They will cause you to end up falling into the trap and fulfill the lusts of the flesh. We will talk about the lusts of the flesh in the next lesson.

There are things that you do that will make provisions for the flesh. We discussed in the beginning of this lesson that if God has told you to loose weight, then you don't need to go into a pastry shop where they sell chocolate chip cookies, cupcakes, apple turnovers, and so many other things. If you enter into that place, you are setting yourself up to fall.



David is a very descriptive example of this principle.

(2 Samuel 11:2-4 NKJV) *“Then it happened one evening that David arose from his bed and walked on the roof of the king's house. And from the roof he saw a woman bathing, and the woman was very beautiful to behold. {3} So David sent and inquired about the woman. And someone said, “Is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?” {4} Then David sent messengers, and took her; and she came to him, and he lay with her, for she was cleansed from her impurity; and she returned to her house.”*

This happened in a time of war when David was king of Israel. He was supposed to be at the battlefield, but he was not. That was his first mistake. Secondly, he saw Bathsheba taking a bath, but did not turn away – his next mistake. He let himself get interested in what he saw and continued with that interest. David

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even found out that she was the wife of one of his trusted commanders, but he still proceeded with his temptation.

This was a costly mistake, because Bathsheba became pregnant. So David had her husband killed to cover up the sin. The sin eventually stole the life of the child. **Remember that you do not sin in a vacuum. Your sin will always affect someone else.** Both deaths could have been prevented if David had turned away and not returned when he saw Bathsheba bathing. The Bible does not tell us how many times David watched her, but he should have turned away the first time. David set himself up for temptation. How did he do this? He stayed there watching and then sent to find out about her.

(1 Cor 10:13 NKJV) *"No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it."*

I come back to this verse often because it is so important. God is able to deliver you out of temptations, but you need to do your part! Do not think,

"Well, I know that I have a problem in this area, but the Bible says that God will make a way of escape for me, so I can go in here."

This is wrong thinking and you are setting yourself up to be tempted. You will bring about your own demise! Perversion of God's Word will lead to perversion of life. What do I mean by this? If you twist the Word of God around to fit you and your own desires, then you nullify the ability for it to work in your life and you will see things from a perverse and an ungodly viewpoint. **Don't change the Word of God, change your life!**

(Romans 13:14 NKJV) *"But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts."*

Do not go anywhere that you know will bring a temptation against you. You need to be as harmless as a dove, but wise as a serpent. **God is thrilled when you use the brain He gave you.**



(1 Pet 5:8 NKJV) *"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."*

Be vigilant means to be watchful, wary, and alert. You need to be watchful in all that you do so that you do not give the devil any place to come and devour you. David was not vigilant and he was caught! You need to always be wary where you go so that you do not make any provision for the flesh by setting yourself up to be tempted.

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**The best way to survive a fight against temptation is not to get into one!
Don't walk into temptation's turf and you will not get devoured.**

There was a pastor in Latin America who had a counseling session with a man. The man told the pastor that he had a problem with horses. Whenever he got around a horse, he would be sexually aroused and end up using the horse to satisfy himself. Well, for a few minutes the pastor was speechless. He had never encountered something like this before in all of his years as a minister. They continued to discuss ways to overcome the problem and one of the first things the pastor told this man was, "STAY AWAY FROM BARNS!"

This is exactly what has been discussed in this lesson. If you find that you are continually tempted in a certain areas of your life, you need to stay away from places that trigger those temptations in you.

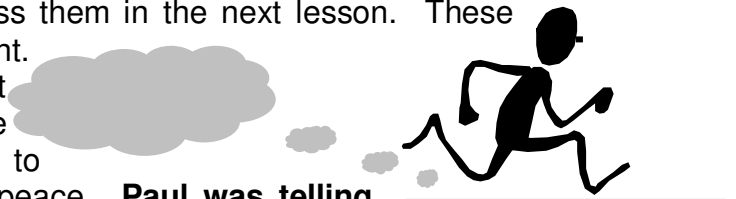
Your horse may be pornography, drinking, sex, drugs, gluttony, smoking, or even stealing. I don't know what it is, but you do and God does, the devil does and your flesh does! Remember to make no provision for your flesh so that you don't fulfill its lusts. There was a man that had gotten free from drinking, but went to a bar with his friends, with the intention of just hanging out and not drinking. He left the bar drunk. Why did that happen? It was because he had not learned how to overcome the temptation to drink and he set himself up for temptation by going where he could be tempted! Paul gave Timothy some very wise counsel.

(2 Timothy 2:22 NKJV) *"Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart."*

Paul told Timothy to flee...not run but flee. That means to leave a trail of smoke behind you. Notice that this does not say "lust" is says "lusts." What are these lusts that Paul was telling Timothy to flee from? We will not go into detail about them in this lesson, but we will discuss them in the next lesson. These lusts are what the flesh and eyes want.

Paul was not telling Timothy to flee lust as in sexual things only, but all that the flesh wants. He went on to tell him to

pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace. **Paul was telling Timothy to not go anywhere near places that would cause him to be tempted, but to get away as fast as his legs could carry him!**



Final Questions:

1. Find five more examples in the Bible where a person has set himself or herself up for temptation. Did they overcome or fail? How did they overcome or fail?

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2. Where do you need to stay away from so that you do not set yourself up for temptation?

"But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts."
(Romans 13:14 NKJV)