

How to Resist Temptation - Prayer

March 2, 2014 AM, PM

If you are a regenerated child of God, there is NO temptation that can overpower you.

There are only two ways temptation can overpower you:

- 1. neglect to prepare*
- 2. willful choice*

HOW TO RESIST TEMPTATION

1. REGENERATION

The new birth provides you with all the power you need to live godly in the midst of a wicked, sinful world; without it you are powerless against sin's temptation.

What the New Birth is:

- 1. brings the human spirit back to spiritual life from spiritual death*
- 2. is the birth of God's Spirit dwelling in the human spirit*
- 3. restores a spiritual union and communion with God*

What the New Birth does:

- 1. creates a spiritual hunger and thirst for God*
- 2. changes the purpose of life from pleasing self to pleasing God*
- 3. creates a repulsion to sin and a love for righteousness*

2. GOD'S WORD

Renewing the mind, and the subsequent transformation, is:

- *an act of our volition*
- *a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit*

Romans 12:2 ESV

"Do not be conformed (to assume a certain form) to this world, but be transformed (metamorphoo - transformed, changed into another form) by the renewal (to make new) of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."

Romans 8:5-6 ESV

5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds (*phroneo - to direct or exercise the mind*) on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit.

6 For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.

2 Corinthians 10:3-6 ESV

3 For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh.

4 For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds.

5 We destroy (take down, pull down) arguments (logismos - reasoning, accounting, speculation) and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ.

3. PRAYER

Jesus gave us two different examples and demonstrations of resisting temptation:

1. *Resisting by the Word of God - Matthew 4:1-11 - "It is written..."*
2. *Resisting by Prayer - Luke 22:39-46*

Luke 22:39-46

39 And he came out and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed him.

40 And when he came to the place, he said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation."

41 And he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed,

42 saying, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done."

43 And there appeared to him an angel from heaven, strengthening him.

44 And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

45 And when he rose from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping for sorrow,

46 and he said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Rise and pray that you may not enter into temptation."

HOW JESUS PRAYED:

1. **Habitual Prayer** "...as was His custom..." (*custom* - ethos - an unwritten custom, behavior based on tradition or habit)

The passion and need of your heart are unmistakably identified by how you prioritize your time.

Psalm 55:16-18

16 But I call to God, and the Lord will save me.

17 Evening and morning and at noon I utter my complaint and moan, and he hears my voice.

18 He redeems my soul in safety from the battle that I wage, for many are arrayed against me.

2. **Solitary Prayer** "...withdrew from them about a stone's throw..." (*no vicarious prayer*)

Your character and life are defined by who and what you are in secret; not by what you project before others.

Do you have a private prayer life, or is your prayer life initiated, influenced or dictated by others?

In secret, you're not tempted to pray to be heard by others, and you're not tempted to pray vicariously through other's prayers. It's simply you and God.

Matthew 6:5-6

5 And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward.

6 But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

3. **Dedicated Prayer** "...knelt down..." (no multi-tasking - eliminate any possible distraction)

1 Kings 18:41-45

41 And Elijah said to Ahab, "Go up, eat and drink, for there is a sound of the rushing of rain."

42 So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Mount Carmel. And he bowed himself down on the earth and put his face between his knees.

43 And he said to his servant, "Go up now, look toward the sea." And he went up and looked and said, "There is nothing." And he said, "Go again," seven times.

44 And at the seventh time he said, "Behold, a little cloud like a man's hand is rising from the sea." And he said, "Go up, say to Ahab, 'Prepare your chariot and go down, lest the rain stop you.'"

45 And in a little while the heavens grew black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode and went to Jezreel.

4. **Honest Prayer** "...remove this cup from me..."

1 John 1:6

6 If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.

7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

5. **Surrendered Prayer** "...not my will, but yours, be done."

Romans 6:19 ESV

"For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification."

Romans 12:1 ESV

"I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship."

Matthew 11:28-30 ESV

28 Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

6. **Fervent Prayer** "...being in an agony he prayed more earnestly..."

How quickly you grow weary or give up in prayer reveals the degree of your fervency, the desperation of your need, and the depth of your conviction.

Matthew 15:21-28

21 And Jesus went away from there and withdrew to the district of Tyre and Sidon.

22 And behold, a Canaanite woman from that region came out and was crying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David; my daughter is severely oppressed by a demon."

23 But he did not answer her a word. And his disciples came and begged him, saying, "Send her away, for she is crying out after us."

24 He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."
25 But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me."
26 And he answered, "It is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs."
27 She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table."
28 Then Jesus answered her, "O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire." And her daughter was healed instantly.

7. **Vigilant Prayer** *"Why are you sleeping? Rise and pray that you may not enter into temptation."*

1 Thessalonians 5:1–11 ESV

1 Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you.
2 For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.
3 While people are saying, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.
4 But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief.
5 For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness.
6 So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober.
7 For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night.
8 But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation.
9 For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,
10 who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him.
11 Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

Prayer focuses our faith and dependence upon God for the ability to resist sin, taking the focus off ourselves.

Matthew 6:9-13 ESV

9 Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.
10 Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
11 Give us this day our daily bread,
12 and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.
13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

1 Corinthians 10:13

12 Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall.
13 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.

The communion of prayer is the channel through which God imparts the strength to resist sin.

Hebrews 2:16-18 ESV

16 For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham.
17 Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.
18 For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

Hebrews 4:14-16

14 Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.

15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

16 Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

2 Peter 1:3-4

3 His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence,

4 by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.

Prayer causes God to be personal, making the sin personal.**Psalm 51:3,4**

3 For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.

4 Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment.

Genesis 39:7-10

7 And after a time his master's wife cast her eyes on Joseph and said, "Lie with me."

8 But he refused and said to his master's wife, "Behold, because of me my master has no concern about anything in the house, and he has put everything that he has in my charge.

9 He is not greater in this house than I am, nor has he kept back anything from me except you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?"

10 And as she spoke to Joseph day after day, he would not listen to her, to lie beside her or to be with her.