

Temptation

Services: Sunday, 2/18 at 8:00 & 10:45

Church Year: First Sunday in Lent – 2018

Wednesdays of Lent: Services at 11 & 7; Meals at 12 & 6

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: On this first Sunday in Lent, today's readings *all touched on the topics of testing and temptation*; furthermore, every day, *we are all being tested and tempted!* So today we focus on those two related topics.

As we get into the topic, *but before today's readings*, let's go to one VERY IMPORTANT passage on the topic of temptation: ^{NAS} **1 Corinthians 10:13** "No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, that you may be able to endure it." What does that mean?

- ➔ The temptations that come to us are *common*.
- ➔ God is in control of the *strength* of each temptation.
- ➔ God always provides a way to *escape* each temptation.

1. **Genesis 22:** ¹ After these things God tested Abraham and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." ² He said, "Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you." ³ So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and his son

Isaac. And he cut the wood for the burnt offering and arose and went to the place of which God had told him.

- a. Who did the testing? The Bible says that “**God tested Abraham...**” We could *more literally* say that God “*proved him, [thus He] put his faith and obedience to the proof.*”¹ God wanted to see whether or not Abraham would obey Him.
- b. How BIG was the test? *It was HUGE!* About 40 years earlier the LORD had promised Abram that he and Sarai would have a son; then, *to indicate that the Promised Messiah would be a future descendant of Abram,* the LORD said: “**...in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed**” (12:3). So for Abraham to kill Isaac was – *in a sense* – to kill the Messiah; *that is HUGE!*
- c. How did Abraham respond? Very early the next morning Abraham set out to do what God said; then, *at the very moment he was going to put Isaac to death,* the Angel of the LORD stopped him; then He said to him, “**...because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will surely bless you...**” (16-17).

2. **James 1:**

¹² **Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial [πειρασμόν (BGT), noun, literally under temptation], for when he has stood the test [δόκιμος (BGT), adjective, more literally, having become approved] **he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who****

¹ <http://biblehub.com/genesis/22-1.htm>

love him. // Temptations will come and *God will allow them*, they will *prove* or *disprove* faith. Peter wrote: “...for a little while... you have been grieved by various trials [*temptations*], so that the tested genuineness of your faith... may be found...” (1 Pet. 1:6-7 ESV).

¹³ **Let no one say when he is tempted** [*πειραζόμενος* (BGT), verb-present participle, literally translated **being tested** or **being tempted**], **“I am being tempted** [*πειράζομαι* (BGT), verb-present passive, literally **tested** or **tempted**] **by God,” for God cannot be tempted** [*πειράζομαι* (BGT), adjective, **is unable to be tempted**] **with evil, and he himself tempts** [*πειράζει* (BGT), verb-present active, **tests** or **tempts**] **no one.**

// Verse 13 includes three forms of the Greek word *πειράζω*; it can be translated “**test**” or “**tempt**”. *In this context, which translation is correct?* From the OT reading, we know that God does test – *as He tested Abraham*. However, in this verse, it says that God “**tempts no one.**” Since God does test, *we know the meaning here has be tempt*; so God does test us, *He does not tempt us – but He allows us to be tempted!*

¹⁴ **But each person is tempted** [*πειράζεται* (BGT), verb-passive, tested or **tempted**] **when he is lured and enticed by his own desire.** ¹⁵ **Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.** // So everyone desperately needs God’s precious gift of life through Jesus!

- a. Will temptations come into our lives? Y N
- b. Can God be tempted? Y N
- c. Does God tempt us? Y N
- d. What does tempt us? Our own desire, *thus our own sinful nature*. The *devil himself* and the

sinful world in which we live are constantly trying to get us to go in a way that is not in agreement with God's Word – either by doing what we should not, or by not doing what we should!

- e. Is temptation itself a sin? The Bible says that Jesus *“in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin”* (Heb. 4:15 ESV). Jesus was tempted much, *but He always took the promised way of escape!* Of course, *He is also the Son of God in human flesh!* Regarding the way of escape, God does faithfully provide it for us, but sadly we oftentimes fail to take it 😊.

3. **Mark 1:** ¹² **The Spirit immediately drove [Jesus] out into the wilderness.** ¹³ **And he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan.** // Wherever we have failed, *Jesus has prevailed as our perfect substitute!* The people of Israel sinned over and over again during their 40 years in the wilderness, *but when Satan himself took his best shots at Jesus during His 40 days in the wilderness, we know from Hebrews 4 that Jesus remained our sinless substitute!*

- a. Was Jesus tempted? Y N
b. Did Jesus fall into sin? Y N

Conclusion: Let us pray: Father in heaven, thank You for controlling the strength of our temptations and always providing a way of escape; help us to ever-trust in Jesus, who *perfectly lived for us and sacrificed His life for us!*

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