

HOW TO OVERCOME TEMPTATION

James 4:7-10

(Not entirely original with me)

Introduction: Temptation is always around and eventually it brings sin into a person's life. If one could only figure out just how to overcome temptation when it comes, then sin would no longer be so frequent in a person's life. How can one overcome and defeat temptation?

I. ONE MUST SUBMIT TO GOD AND THEN RESIST THE DEVIL

1. James 4:7
2. "Submit" means to put oneself under someone and in this case it is GOD - under His power and strength.
 - Focus the mind upon God and His Word IMMEDIATELY when temptation strikes.
 - Push the temptation out of the mind and begin to think about God and go over and over His Word in your mind.
3. "Resist" means to take a stand against something or someone and in this case it is the Devil.
 - Exert energy and effort to oppose and defeat temptation and the Devil.
 - Remember what Jesus Christ did when He was tempted, He quoted the Scriptures and resisted Satan, the Devil.
4. One must both SUBMIT and RESIST because one cannot defeat temptation AND Satan by:
 - standing and fighting alone.
 - going one's own way.
 - giving in a little.
 - refusing to listen and obey God's Word.
5. Wonderful things happen when the Christian "submits" to God and "resists" temptation and the Devil.
 - Ephesians 4:26-27; 1 Peter 5:8; Matthew 6:10; 26:39; Romans 6:13; Ephesians 6:13
6. Satan (Devil) is overcome by:
 - asking God and praying for help (Matthew 6:13)
 - quoting Scripture, fasting and praying (Matthew 4:3-10)
 - ministering in Jesus' name (Luke 10:17)
 - sessions of prayer (Luke 22:31-32)
 - claiming the name and power of the God of peace (Romans 16:20)
 - forgiving others (2 Corinthians 2:10-11)
 - not giving place to the Devil (Ephesians 4:27)
 - putting on the whole armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-11)
 - repenting and acknowledging the truth (2 Timothy 2:25-26)
 - not fearing and being faithful (Revelation 2:10-11)

III. DRAW NEAR TO GOD AND REPENT

1. James 4:8
2. The door into God's presence is never closed and the believer is strongly urged and encouraged to draw near.

- How does one draw near to God?
 - By reading the Word of God.
 - By prayer, asking God for strength and power, mercy and grace.
- Draw near to God and God will draw near to you.
 - 1 Corinthians 10:13; Hebrews 2:18; 4:15-16; Psalm 28:7; 73:28; Isaiah 41:10

3. God, however, will not draw near to certain persons. A person must do two things before he/she can draw near to God:
 - That person must have clean hands - NO SIN!
 - Isaiah 1:16; Jeremiah 4:14; Acts 22:16; 2 Corinthians 7:1; 2 Timothy 2:21
 - That person must purify his/her heart and quit wavering between God and temptation. No divided loyalty between God and the world.
 - Matthew 5:8; Luke 9:62; 16:13; 1 Corinthians 10:21; 1 Timothy 1:5; Hebrews 10:22

III. BE ENDURING AND DEEPLY, MOURNFULLY CONCERNED

1. James 4:9
2. When temptation strikes, it is not the time:
 - to be laughing, to be jolly, to be joking around, to be teasing, to be light headed, to be unconcerned.
 - to be complacent, to be comfortable, to be at ease, to be lying around.
3. Temptation is a time for battle and discipline and endurance during the battle. One must:
 - get serious, mourn, weep, ask God, BEG God for help.
4. When the believer takes the temptation seriously, God WILL hear and deliver.

IV. HUMBLE ONES SELF IN THE SIGHT OF GOD

1. James 4:10
2. God sees everyone at all times, even when they are tempted. Therefore, when you are tempted:
 - God must not see one taking the temptation lightly or paying no attention to it at all.
 - God must not see a self-sufficient person that fails to call upon Him.
 - God must not see one looking at temptation with admiration and wonder.
3. Whenever a person is tempted and humbles him/herself in the sight of God, God will lift that person up, meet his/her need, and deliver him/her from that temptation.
 - Only when one realizes his/her own ignorance can he/she ask the guidance of God.
 - Only when one realizes his/her own poverty will he/she pray for the riches of God's grace.
 - Only when one realizes his/her own weakness in things will he/she call for God's strength.
 - Only when one realizes that he/she cannot handle life by him/herself will he/she kneel before God.
 - Only when one realizes his/her own sin will he/she realize the need of a Savior and the forgiveness of God.
4. Luke 14:11; Romans 12:3; Philippians 2:4-5; 1 Peter 5:5; Psalm 138:6

CONCLUSION:

- Temptation and sin are all around everyone. Controlling temptation will control sin. Practice these four truths.