

#5 How To Handle Temptation.

*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.

1 Corinthians 10:13

There Are Only Three Ways To Handle Temptation.

1. **You give in to it:** “What is natural, and feels good the just do it.” Give caution to the wind, the animal in you says go with it.
2. **You Fight it:** There are those who constantly battle , but are constantly loosing in the battle. They try to defeat temptation in the energy of the flesh.
3. **You overcome it through Christ:** Notice: (1 Cor. 10:12-13) You don't have to be defeated by lust. **“Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. (13) 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.”**

The Subjects of **Temptation**.

- Being saved does not make you immune to temptation. As a believer you will be tempted in the areas of:
 1. Dishonesty.
 2. Materialism.
 3. Sex.
 4. Greed.
 5. Pride.
- Thank God for Jesus. **Notice: (Heb. 4:15) “For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.”** The one who thinks he’s in control, and doesn’t need help will be the one who falls to temptation.

The Source of Temptation.

- Temptation will come through Three avenues.

1. The world.
2. The Devil.
3. The Flesh.

1. The External Foe-The “World.”

- Notice: (1Jn. 2:15) “Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”
- Notice: (Rom. 12:2) “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

- What are some examples of the “world” and its value system?

1. Fashion: acceptance is in the way we look? Too thin, Too fat?
2. You can be whatever sex you want to be?
3. You don't need to be married to live together?
4. Do what you feel is right, if it feels good to you?
No moral/ethical absolutes.
5. Your political affiliation defines your worth?
6. Everybody lies, cheats, and steals a little?
7. I'm not accountable to no one, matter a fact I'm entitled?

Notice: (Jam. 4:4) “You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.”

- The **“world”** can be any belief/ value system that ultimately drives a wedge between you and God. It’s contrary to His Holy Word.

2. The Internal Foe=The “Flesh.”

- (Gal. 5:19-21) **“Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, (20) idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, (21) envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”**
- What is The “Flesh?” It’s your **predisposition** to sin/ It’s your old **“Adamic nature.”**
- But....I’m a Good Person: (Rom. 3:23) **“for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,**
- Notice: (Eph. 2:3) **“Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.”** Also (Psa. 58:3) **“The wicked are estranged from the womb; These who speak lies go astray from birth.”**

- **The Deeds of The FLESH!**
- Notice: (Gal. 5:16-21) **“But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. 17 For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law. 19 Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, 20 idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, 21 envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”**
- **The Deeds of The SPIRIT!**
- Notice: (Gal. 5:22-23) **“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.”**
- **How Do You Know You Are Truly “Born From Above?”**
- Notice: (Gal. 5:24) **“Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.”**

3. The Infernal Foe= The “Devil.”

Notice: (Eph. 6:12) “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.”

- You Have a Real Enemy! Notice: (Jn. 10:10) “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.”
- Notice: (1Pet. 5:8) “Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.”
- The “Unholy Trinity of Temptation” is :
 1. The World
 2. The Flesh
 3. The Devil
 - Think of your flesh as a pool of gasoline.
 - Think of the world as a lighted match.
 - Think of the devil as the one who strikes, and throws the match.
 - Notice: (1 Cor. 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, so that you will be able to endure it.”

The Seat of Temptation!

- When temptation comes, it will be in three areas because that's all there is. Remember your nature is made of **body**, **soul**, and **spirit**.
- **Notice:** (1 Thess. 5:23) “Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your **spirit** and **soul** and **body** be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”
- **Remember:** Adam and Eve were created in the perfect image of God. After sin interred in, we are left with is a faint representation of the tri-unity of Almighty God.

The First Seat of Temptation

The Body. Enemy **Flesh!**

- This is the first part of your nature that will be tempted because it is visible (**you can see it**).
- Our bodies are nothing but flesh, an earthly monkey suit crying to be released. Therefore your bodily appetites can be a seat of temptation.
- **Notice: (Matt. 26:41)** “Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the **flesh** is weak.”
- **Notice: (Rom. 6:12)** “Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal **body** so that you obey its lusts,”

The Body And It's Appetite

- **Milk Does a Body Good, NOT Sin!**

Notice: (Gal. 5:19-21) “Now the deeds of the **flesh** are evident, which are: **immorality, impurity, sensuality, (20) idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, (21) envying, drunkenness, carousing,** and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”

- **What are some other Sin's of the body?**

Gluttony, Cutting, Suicide.....?

- **Question #1:** Why are sexual sins specified by Paul as being the only sins against his body? Why not, for example, drugs or alcohol?
- **Question #2:** What is it in the nature of a sexual sin that makes Paul highlight this as being against a man's body?

Answer To Question #1

- On the basis of OT teaching (e.g. Gen. 2:24), “For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; **and they shall become one flesh.**”
- Jesus reaffirmed this in (Mark 10:6-9), “But from the beginning of creation, God **MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE. (7) “FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER, (8) AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH; so they are no longer two, but one flesh. (9) “What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.”**
- Jesus was teaching that sexual intercourse is not an inconsequential, isolated act but one uniting man and woman in an intimate, complete, and enduring bond.
- Consequently He is revolted by the thought that a member of Christ's body should ever be united with the body of a prostitute.
- In Corinth, most of the prostitutes were slave women attached to the service of a pagan temple. It was commonly thought that any man having sexual relations with these sacred prostitutes entered into communion with the god of whom they served.

- **Notice: (1 Cor. 6:15-20)** “Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take away the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? May it never be! **(16)** Or do you not know that the one who joins himself to a prostitute is one body with her? For He says, “THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH.” **(17)** But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him. **(18) Flee immorality.** Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. **(19)** Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? **(20)** For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.
- **What was another danger of being involved with a prostitute?**
Idolatry! Notice what Paul said about this: **(1 Cor. 10:20-23)**
 “No, but I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God; **and I do not want you to become sharers in demons.** **(21)** You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons. **(22)** Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? We are not stronger than He, are we? **(23)** All things are lawful, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful, but not all things edify.”

Answer To Question #2

- Question #2: What is it in the nature of a sexual sin that makes Paul highlight this as being against a man's body?
- Answer: Sins like alcohol and drugs are more of **outside** stuff being put in a body, but in a case of sexual sin, it's where you use yourself to **intertwine** with someone's soul and thus creates a soul tie. In any other sin there are not soul ties created. This also involves the **secondary person** while any other sins are done **individually**.
- Notice: (Prov. 6:32-33) “The one who commits adultery with a woman is lacking sense; He who would destroy himself does it. (33) Wounds and disgrace he will find, And his reproach will not be blotted out.”

- As far back as the Mosaic books we find some interesting references to sexual immorality and nakedness.
- The first recorded human curse was over nakedness (Gen 9:20-23).
- Nearly two entire chapters along with many other references were a code of ethics on nakedness and sexual immorality (**Lev. 18 and 20**).
- Exposed genitalia or nakedness were common in Canaanite demonic worship. Instructions and prohibitions to Moses were so Israel's altars would not be like the Canaanites' (**Ex. 28:41-43; 20:26**).
- When Moses returned from the mountain, Aaron had lost control of the people as they worshiped a golden calf, (**Ex. 32:25**). N.K.J.V. says they were **"unrestrained"** The K.J.V. says **"naked,"** The Living Bible says **"committing adultery,"** and finally the N.A.S.B. say's they were **"out of control."** All this happened shortly after a move of God.
- One of the keys to overcoming sexual sin lies in the meditation of the Word of God. This will nurture the fear of the Lord in you. For example, in (**Gal. 5:19-21**) the works of the flesh are divided into **four** basic categories **1) sexual sins, 2) sins connected with pagan religion and the occult, 3) sins of the temper,** and **4) sins of drunkenness.**
- It is interesting that **sexual sin** is listed first, not only here, but also in several other scriptural references in the New Testament.

Scriptural References On Sexual Sin.

- (Rom. 1:24, 6:19) – **Uncleanness** is singled out.
- (1 Cor. 6:9-11) – **Sexual sins** listed first.
- (Gal. 5:19-21) – **Sexual sins** listed first.
- (Eph. 4:19) – **Lewdness** and **uncleanness** singled out.
- (Eph. 5:3) – **Fornication** and **uncleanness** singled out; let it not once be named among you.
- (Col. 3:5) – **Fornication** and **uncleanness** listed first.
- (1 Thess. 4:3) – **Sexual immorality** singled out in our walk of sanctification.
- (1 Pet. 4:3) – **Lewdness** listed first from our past life.

There Are Four Sexual Sin's

RUN!!!!!!

1. **Adultery**: Unlawful sexual intercourse involving at least one married person. Adultery is incompatible with the harmonious laws of family life in God's kingdom, and is under God's judgment since it violates God's original purpose.
 2. **Fornication**: Pornography, illicit sexual intercourse including prostitution, whoredom, incest, licentiousness (lack of moral restraint), and habitual immorality (would include sexual fantasies that lead to masturbation).
 3. **Uncleanness**: Often refers to homosexuality and lesbianism
 4. **Lewdness**: unashamed indecency, unbridled lust, unrestrained depravity (a disposition or settled tendency to evil, the innate corruption of unregenerate man), the person with this characteristic has an insolent defiance of public opinion, sinning in broad daylight with arrogance and contempt. Again, this often refers to sexual sin
- **Notice**: (1 Cor. 6:13-14). “Food is for the stomach and the stomach is for food, but God will do away with both of them. Yet the **body is not for immorality, but for the Lord**, and the **Lord is for the body**. 14 Now God has not only raised the Lord, but will also raise us up through His power.”
 - **Notice**: (Matt. 10:28) “Do not fear those who kill the **body** but are unable to kill the soul; **but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.**”

The Second Seat of Temptation

The Soul. Enemy **World**.

- **Your soul** is the “psychological part of you. It consists of your MIND, EMOTIONS, and WILL. It’s your sense of humor, intellect, temperament, taste, ego, and self.
- **Notice: (1 Pet. 2:11)** “Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to **abstain** from fleshly lusts which wage war against the **soul**.”
- **So do you want to be a stranger to God, or a stranger in the world?** You can't be both. **Notice: (James. 4:4)** “Don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.” This doesn't mean you shouldn't build friendships with people who don't know the Lord. But it does mean that Christians are not to make an alliance with sinful desires. It should feel strange to us to indulge in anything which God forbids. And if it doesn't feel strange, then we need to take a hard look at whether we truly have a relationship with God.
- **Notice: (Ephesians 5:3)** “But immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints.”
- **Remember**, God judges the source and origin of sin, not it’s manifestation or lack of manifestation!

Be **Who** You Already Are.

- **Remember**, Peter is urging these believers to abstain from the “**passions of the flesh.**” (1 Pet. 2:11)
- He warns them to do this because these passions are **warring against their souls**, hoping to destroy them.
- Peter just explained **who we are** as believers (**identity**), and then comes to **how we ought to live**. Because of **who you already are**.
Notice: (1 Pet. 2:9–11) “**But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God’s OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellence's of Him** who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; **(10)** for you once were NOT A PEOPLE, but now you are THE PEOPLE OF GOD; you had NOT RECEIVED MERCY, but now you have RECEIVED MERCY. **(11)** Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers **to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul.**”
- Some will get this wrong by thinking these kinds of commands are not necessary for believers, because they’ve already been saved. Others will get this wrong by thinking we abstain so that we can be saved. **Both are seriously wrong.**

Be **Who** You Already Are.

- The text tells us who we are, and then gives us the command (so that we increasingly become who we already are). Those who walk in love, and crucify their flesh (not perfectly) **are showing they have already been made new through faith.**
- **The same pattern shows up in (1 Cor. 5:6–7) “Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough? (7) Clean out the old leaven** so that you may be a new lump, just as you are in fact unleavened. For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed.” Be about becoming something new, because you already have been made new.
- You don’t become a good tree by bearing good fruit. You show that you are a good tree by bearing good fruit. **(Matt. 7:17–20)**
- When you abstain from the passions of the flesh, you’re not making yourself God’s chosen people, but revealing that you already are God’s chosen people.

How Do **Passions** Destroy You?

- How do your passions war against you and try to destroy you? (1 Pet. 2:11)
Notice: that the **“soul”** of a man or woman is the place of godly thinking, living, and choosing. That is why fleshly passions wage war against it.
 1. The enemy is not your soul.
 2. **The enemy is your flesh!**
 3. The enemy is not your mind.
 4. **The enemy is your flesh!**
- You exist (were made) to proclaim **“excellent things”** about God. (1 Pet. 2:9)
- **The passions of the flesh:** These are any passions that cause you to stop marveling most in the excellency of God They **dim** and **destroy** your passions for God.
- They do this by making other things **look brighter** and **more beautiful** than God. (1 Pet. 2:11)
- The passions of the flesh strip you of the power to do the thing you were created to do: **“to proclaim God’s excellence’s.”**

What Causes Us To Sin?

- James identifies the fundamental cause, or source of our sin: it is our “passions” or “desires” that wage war within our souls.
- **Notice: (James. 4:1-3)** “What is the **source** of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your **pleasures** that wage war in your members? **(2)** You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. **(3)** You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures.”
- Notice what James does not say.
 1. He doesn't say that the cause of our sinning is Satan.
 2. He doesn't say that you fight and engage in bitter conflict because Satan is at war within you.
 3. He doesn't say that the cause of our sinning is the world and its corrupt ways.
 4. He doesn't say that the cause of our sin is the dysfunctional family in which we were raised.
 5. **The cause of all our sinning are those “passions” or “desires” that wage war within us.**

MIND WARS!

- (2 Corinthians 10:3–5) “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, (4) for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. (5) *We are* destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking **Every Thought** captive to the obedience of Christ, “



- **The Apostle Paul was in complete agreement with Peter on this point.**
Notice: (Col. 3:5) “put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, **passion, evil desire**, and covetousness, which is idolatry”
- **Notice: (Mk. 7:21–23)** “For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, **(22)** deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness. **(23)** All these evil things **proceed from within** and defile the man.”
- **Both Paul and Peter** is based on their belief that the Christian is energized, animated, and empowered by the Holy Spirit **(Col. 1:29)**. **No desire or passion or urge** is so entrenched in the human soul that a person indwelt by the Spirit cannot conquer it. But even if you can’t conquer it or change it you can, with the Spirit’s help, choose not to indulge in it.
- Many contend that you can’t simply choose to suppress certain passions. In fact, they argue that it is psychologically dangerous to attempt any such thing. Venting our desires, giving them full and fetterless freedom, is the counsel we most often hear. “Be yourself! Embrace your longings!” And above all else, never judge or condemn someone for their expression or attempt to find fulfillment of these inward urges.
- When I look within myself I see evil passions and selfish desires and uncleanness and covetousness and I want nothing of them. These are violations of my true self. These are invasive enemies from which I long to be delivered by the grace of God. I have no desire to affirm all that is within me. I rather choose to defy much of what is within me. I choose by the grace of God **to oppose it, defeat it, and live in true freedom from its enslaving power.**

Winning The War For Your Soul.

- In **(Eph. 4:22)** Paul referred to this as “deceitful desires.”
- These “passions” or “desires” that **Paul, Peter** and **James** all mention will always **lie to you**.
- They will try to deceive you into believing that by indulging them and giving them sway in your life and by making room for them in your experience that you will find real and lasting joy. Don’t believe them! They lie!
- They are “deceitful” desires. Fight them with reminders of truth. Fight them by laying hold of the truth found in **(Psa. 16:11) “You will make known to me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.”**

The Third Seat of Temptation

The Spirit. Enemy Devil.

- There are a lot of believers who reason that the “Soul,” and “Spirit” are the same thing, but that’s bad theology. There is a difference!
- **Notice: (1Thess. 5:23)** “Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your **spirit** and **soul** and **body** be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”
- **Notice: (Heb. 4:12)** “For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of **soul** and **spirit**, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”
- **What is The Spirit?** The spirit is much like the soul in that it is invisible. Spirit, and soul are “Indivisible,” but they are not identical. Remember I've shared with you that man is created in the image of God, therefore we've been given something that no other creature has, a **“Spirit,”**
- **Notice: (Jn.4:24)** “God is **spirit**, and those who worship Him must worship in **spirit** and truth.” At the moment of “conversion” something wonderful happens.

Benefits From Being Saved.

- **Notice:** (Col. 2:13) “When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, **He made you alive together with Him**, having forgiven us all our transgressions,”
- **Notice:** (1 Pet. 3:18) “For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, **but made alive in the spirit;**”
- **The “Proof” Of Your Conversion:**
Notice: (Rom. 8:16) “The Spirit Himself testifies with our **spirit** that we are children of God,”
- **The spirit is therefore,** that part of your nature that can,
 1. You can **“know”** God.
 2. You can **“fellowship”** with God.
 3. You can **“commune”** with God.

Understanding BODY, SOUL, and SPIRIT.

- What Do I Need To Know?

1. With your **“Body”** you have **“Physical”** life, and you know the world beneath you.
 2. With your **“Soul”** you have **“Psychological”** life, and you know the world around you, and within you.
 3. With your **“Spirit”** you have **“Spiritual”** life, and you know the world above you.
- When your **“Body”** is right, then your **“Healthy.”**
 - When your **“Soul”** is right, then your **“Happy.”**
 - When your **“Spirit”** is right, then your **“Holy.”**
 - This was the original intent of creation. This is what made Adam whole!
 - Remember: The World is **“Out of Whack,”** because of **“sin.”** When the devil comes to tempt, he attacks the **body, soul, or spirit.**

How Do believers “Resist” The Devil?

- **Notice: (James. 4:7)** “Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”
- Peter commands Christians to have a mind that is resolute and to **resist** Satan by being **firm** in their **faith**.
- **“Resist” means:** “to take a stand against,” and to be “**firm**” is to make that stand solid (the Greek is *stereos*, from which comes the English *stereo*, meaning “solid,” or balanced at both ends). That is done by being solidly fixed on *the faith* (*te pistei*), which is biblical revelation. It is the whole body of revealed truth contained in Scripture.
- This is a call to know and believe sound doctrine, to be discerning in distinguishing truth from error, and to be willing to defend the truth and expose error.
- **Jude’s call is most appropriate in this connection:** Notice: (Jude. 3) “Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints” It is that “once-for-all” faith which is the inscripturated revelation of God and constitutes the **faith** on which believers **stand solidly** and from which they continually resist Satan.

- This **“strong stand”** is the result of the faithful leading of shepherds in the church, as Paul indicates in: **(Eph. 4:11–14)**
Notice: “And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, **12** for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; **13** until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. **14** As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming;”
- **Understand**, Satan is a **liar** (John 8:44; cf. Gen. 3:1; 2 Thess. 2:9) and a **deceiver** (Rev. 20:7–8), the only sure way to stand up against him is by faithful obedience to biblical truth. The battle is a spiritual one, in the supernatural realm, as Paul notes in:

- **Notice: (2 Cor. 10:3–5)** “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.”
- **“Speculations”** are satanic ideologies, ideas, theories, religious philosophies, and systems of thought “raised up against the knowledge of God”; that is, they are anti-biblical viewpoints that have people captive as if they were imprisoned in a great fortress. Christians cannot smash those ideas with human ingenuity, but only with biblical truth—“taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.” Only when someone has the mind of Christ on a matter is he rescued from such ideas.

How Do You “Test” The Spirit’s?

- John understands how important it is to realize that you can't believe everything you hear, you can't believe everything that is purported to come from God, you can't believe everything that is supposedly biblical. Cannot believe all teachers of religion, you cannot believe all Christian preachers, or Christian evangelists or teachers. You cannot believe all who came...who claim to speak for God and claim to have a prophetic voice that is set loose in the world.
- **Notice: (1 Jn. 4:1-6)** “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. **2** By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; **3** and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world. **4** You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world. **5** They are from the world; therefore they speak as from the world, and the world listens to them. **6** We are from God; he who knows God listens to us; he who is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.
- There is the Spirit of truth, the Holy Spirit, and there is the spirit of error who would be Satan and his demons. Nothing is benign. All spiritual truth either comes from a divine source or a demonic source. And we know that God speaks truth and reveals truth and Satan speaks a lie and is a deceiver and so it is critical that we be able to discern the difference. God's truth must be guarded very, very carefully. It is always under attack. It is relentlessly under attack.

- **This is why the Apostle Paul instructed Timothy** at the end of his first letter to him, **Notice: (1 Tim. 6 :20) “O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you, avoiding worldly and empty chatter and the opposing arguments of what is falsely called “knowledge” —**
- **Here’s how Paul began his second letter to Timothy.**
Notice: (2 Tim. 1:13-15) “Retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. **14 Guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to you. **15** You are aware of the fact that all who are in Asia turned away from me, among whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes.”**
 Paul is saying to Timothy, "Don't be like them, don't abandon the truth, don't abandon me the true Apostle.”
- **It's the guardianship that is so important.** There are always false religionists, cultists. There are always those who come along with their deceptive schemes that purport to be biblical, that quote Bible verses, that say they have a message from God, that have a better way to understand the Bible and apply the Bible to make the Bible acceptable, to make the gospel acceptable. There are those who in outright fashion attack the Bible and then there are those who are much more subtle than that. But we are constantly being called to the defense of the Scripture and the defense of the truth.

Two requirements are needed to “Guard” the Truth.

1. First, you have to “**know the truth.**” That's why Paul said to Timothy, “**Hold on to sound doctrine.**” You can't guard what you don't understand. If a minister or a pastor does not know sound doctrine, he can't guard it. So, first of all, it requires the knowledge of sound doctrine, and
2. Secondly, it requires the “**Recognition of error.**” **Sound doctrine** and **sound discernment**, are essential in the church. This is our primary responsibility and it runs parallel to our teaching. How can we teach sound doctrine if we don't know it, how can we teach our people to avoid error if we don't recognize it. Sound doctrine and sound discernment go side by side and are the primary responsibility of every preacher, every elder, every shepherd and pastor in the church. And John discharges that responsibility. John knows sound doctrine and he articulates it and John also possesses sound discernment and he provides helpful warnings to aid others to do the same.

- **In (1 Jn. 4,) John commands believers to test the spirits.**
This is necessary if you're going to discern between the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. You have to know whatever information is coming to you by **its source**. And again I say, error is not benign, it is malignant. It is not human, it is demonic. We saw last time, spiritual truth comes from the Holy Spirit and it is **life-giving, life-sustaining, life-producing, God-glorifying**, or it comes from demons. It is either the doctrine of God or the doctrine of demons. It is either that word which is sent and energized by the Holy Spirit, or it is that which comes from seducing spirits. And teachers are either the true teachers of God, or hypocritical liars, espousing the doctrine of demons fostered by seducing spirits. We must know the difference because of the malignancy of error because of the power of truth. **The truth gives life, error kills.**
- **First, John gives us a “command” to test,** "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God."
- **Secondly, is the “reason” for the test.** And the reason is found at the end of **V. :1**, "Because many false prophets have gone out into the world."

Proof Is In The TEST!

- Thirdly, is the “way to test,” or the “How” to test.
We need to know **how** to know that something comes from the Spirit of God. And he tells us, **“By this..”** and then goes on to identify what **“this”** refers to.
- Here are the “Three Tests” that will reveal that something is coming from the Spirit of God, and not a demon spirit.
- 1. The first test, “the Confession of the divine Lord.”
(1 Jn. 4:2) again, **“Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God.”** There's one thing demons will inevitably deny in all their demonic systems, and that is they will deny the deity of Jesus Christ. They will deny God in human flesh. In a word, they deny the incarnation. When someone comes and affirms that Jesus Christ is God in flesh, that is divine truth. If you have somebody who denies the Trinity, you have a problem because Jesus Christ cannot be God come in the flesh, the second person of the Trinity in the fullness of what the New Testament teaches about Him if in fact there is not a Trinity.

Notice: (1 Jn. 2:22-23) “Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son. (23) Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also.”

- **I hope you understand how very, important one's Christology is.**

If one errors on the identity of Jesus Christ, that is not from the Spirit of God. Every spirit that confesses Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God. That's the first proposition about Jesus, that He is God, He is the eternal life that came from dwelling in the very presence of God the Father and God the Spirit down to earth. You're confessing that Jesus is a person, not just a proposition. You're confessing that Jesus as a person is God in human flesh, not a created being, as the **Mormons** and the **Jehovah's Witnesses** and **others say**. You are saying He is come from God. That is implying the necessity for Him to come into this world in human form to carry out His redemptive work as a substitute for men. We believe then that the human Jesus and the divine Christ are one and the same. When someone has that Christology, they are speaking a message that comes from the Holy Spirit.

The “Jesus” of The Cults .

- In Matthew chapter 24, Jesus’ disciples came to him and asked, “Tell us, when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?” In responding to this question, it’s very interesting what Jesus identified as the foremost sign of his second coming and of the end of the age, **“Watch out that no one deceives you. For many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many.”**
- Today we are seeing the fulfillment of this warning sign as never before. Our world is literally flooded with false “christs” and false messiahs. It is estimated that there are over 1,000 cults in America alone with some 25-30 million followers! And each of these false cults promotes their own man-made version of “Jesus Christ” who is not the Jesus of the Bible.
- So, who is the “Jesus” of the cults?

1. **Jehovah's Witnesses:** They say that Jesus is actually Michael, the Archangel. He was the first creation of God. He came to Earth as a man, died on a stake, and rose from the grave invisibly as a spirit. Jesus then returned invisibly to Brooklyn, N.Y. in 1914 to head-up the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society.
2. **Mormons (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints):** They teach that Jesus is the spirit brother of Satan. He was once a human being like you and I, but through good works he evolved spiritually to become a god. However, Jesus is just one god amongst a pantheon of gods, all of who were once human and evolved to become gods themselves. Jesus was born to Mary through physical incest when his father god had sexual relations with her. And Mormons teach that the blood and cross of Christ is foolishness and cannot fully atone for our sins (ever notice how there's no cross on any Mormon church or temple?).

3. **Christian Science, and Mary Baker Eddy:** say that Jesus was only a man and that Christ is a Divine idea. Furthermore, Jesus never did any supernatural miracles; he simply showed people their mental illusions of sin, evil, illness and disease. Christian Science says that Jesus did not die and his resurrection was only in a spiritual sense.
4. **Sun Myung Moon (the Korean messiah):** claims that Jesus was a man who failed his divine mission and he, Rev. Moon, is the second coming of Christ to unite the world under the banner of the **Unification Church**.
5. **Unitarians:** believe that Jesus was a good man who was mistakenly deified by his followers.
6. **Scientology: and L. Ron Hubbard:** claim that Jesus is a false dream.
7. **Spiritists:** say that Jesus is an advanced medium in the 6th sphere of the astrological projection (wherever that is?).

So, who is the real Jesus?

- **Notice:** (John 1:1) “In the beginning was the Word (Jesus), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” A few verses later in (John 1:14) we learn, “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”
- **Notice:** (Col. 1:15) Paul tells us that Jesus “is the visible image of the invisible God...” In (Col. 2:9) Paul says, “For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form...”
- **The real Jesus is the one true God of all creation.** He is the second person of the eternal Triune Godhead. He loves us so much that He broke into human history and split history into B.C. and A.D. to personally reveal Himself to us. The Bible says that Jesus came to “seek and to save the lost” (Luke 19:10; John 3:16-17; Ephesians 2:8-9). And as (Acts 4:12) declares, “Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.”

■ **The Second Test “Possession of the devine life.”**

It comes from (Rom. 10:9,) “that if you confess with your mouth **Jesus as Lord...what...Lord...Lord...Lord.**” Demons recognize His deity. There are others who would recognize or affirm His deity. But it is absolutely critical that you confess Him as Lord.

Notice: (Lk. 10:16) “The one who listens to you listens to Me, and the one who rejects you rejects Me; and he who rejects Me rejects the One who sent Me.”

Notice: (Jn. 8:42) “Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and have come from God, for I have not even come on My own initiative, but He sent Me.” In the **incarnation**, God becomes a partaker of human nature.

In **regeneration**, man becomes a partaker of the divine nature.

Notice: (1 Jn. 4:4) “You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world.”

- **Notice: (1 Jn. 2:27) “But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him.”**

- **Notice: (2 Jn. 3) “Grace, mercy and peace will be with us, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.”**
- **Notice: (1 Jn. 4:2) “Jesus Christ has come in the flesh,”** not “into the flesh,”...as if the Christ's spirit...just came down and temporarily went in to some man, stayed there for a while and then left. It doesn't say that He came into the flesh, it says that He came in the flesh. He didn't descend into an already existing man, He came and was born. He came and actually indwelt that little tiny baby in the mystery of the incarnation in the very womb of Mary and was framed and formed there into the God/Man.
- **Jesus Christ also is full of meaning. “Jesus,”** is the Greek form of “Joshua,” which means **Jehovah saves**. **“Christ”** means the **Anointed One, the King, the Messiah**. **So you have to confess** that this is the God/Man who came as God's chosen King and Messiah and took on flesh to be a substitute for sinners. And on the other side of that, **V:3, “Every spirit that does not confess Jesus in this way is not from God.”**

- **The Bible teaches, wherever Jesus is not confessed, you can't know God.** Every spirit that comes up with any religion, any spiritual teaching that leaves out Jesus, is not from God. Any redefinition of Jesus or the absence of Jesus is not from God.
- **Notice: (1 Jn. 4:3)** it says, "This is the spirit of antichrist of which you heard it is coming and now it is already in the world."
- **So wherever Christ in His true person is denied,** you have demonic data. Any system that denies the deity of Christ, anything from **Christian Science** to **Islam**, any of it that denies the true nature of Jesus Christ is from demons, the spirit of error.
- **Notice: (1 Jn. 2:18)** "Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared; **from this we know that it is the last hour.**" In other words, we know Christ has come because of all the attacks on Him.

The Holy Spirit Works In The **TRUE** Believer.

- **You understand because you have the mind of Christ, (1 Cor. 2).** God has planted His truth in you, planted His Spirit in you as a resident teacher. You are impervious, in one sense, from fatal error. You can be led astray on some issues, **but not concerning the truth of the gospel.**
- **You possess God's life.** You possess God's Spirit. And that's another simple test. Does this teacher possess divine life? Are they from God? Are they free from error, **heresy?**
- **As you listen to what people have to say,** you can be **“discerning”** because you know the truth. You have spiritual instincts that are right and accurate. You can trust them. When you hear somebody teaching something, and you say to yourself, **“That is not right,”** that's the Spirit of God, the truth of God kicking in and acting in a discerning fashion on your behalf.
- **As you walk in the Spirit and walk in obedience to the truth,** the Spirit of God exercises that protective influence. You are saved because **you know the truth and believe the truth.** It is the **“evidence”** of your regeneration. And there will be in your life the fruit of that regeneration.

➤ So... How Do You Test People?

1. By their view of Christ. "Christology." The **"incarnation."**
2. By how they live. Do they manifest, do they demonstrate the characteristics of **"regeneration"** (are they born from above)? **Remember**, The Bible says, **"You're from God, you're His little children, you have overcome them."** You've overcome the world," and that's what moves them, controls them, attracts them, dominates them.
3. The Third Test **"The profession of the divine law."**
Notice: (1 Jn. 4:5) **"They are from the world; therefore they speak as from the world, and the world listens to them."** The false teachers are very popular. That's a dead giveaway. The source of their knowledge is **"The World."**

Notice: (1 Jn. 4:6) **"We're from God. He who knows God **listens to us.** He who is not from God **does not listen to us.**"**

Here's the bottom line. When you meet these teachers, and listen to their teaching, you test their Christology. What's their doctrine of the incarnation? You test their regeneration. Are they manifesting evidences of being a child of God, or are they just parroting stuff from the world?

- And then, **thirdly**, when you bring the “**law of God**” to bear upon them, **do they respond to it?** Do they express devotion to the divine law? And that's **V :6 "He who knows God listens to us."** Do these false teachers/religions **"SUBMIT"** to the authority of **SCRIPTURE?**
- **Notice: (2 Jn. 9)** “Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the **teaching of Christ**, does not have God; the one who **abides in the teaching**, he has both the Father and the Son.”

You Must “TRY” The Spirit’s.

JUDE 2-4

- “May mercy and peace and love be multiplied to you. **(3)** Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that **you contend earnestly for the faith** which was once for all handed down to the saints. **(4)** For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.”

Studying The Seasons of Temptation.

- A. The Temptation of Youth:** Primarily when we are young temptation comes in the realm of the **body**. Sex, drugs, violence, rebellion, laziness. Even though a person of any age can succumb to these temptations, they are primarily sins of youth.
- B. The Temptations of Middle Age:** The **world** is the primary agent of temptation for the middle aged. This sin involves the soul, (ego) wanting the **biggest, newest**, and the **best**. Biggest house, yard, pool. New car, clothes. Best of everything, kids, achievements, trophies, and sometimes that includes “spouse.” They spend their time, resources, and energy chasing after the world.
- C. The Temptation of Old Age:** Too old to chase the kids, and you never achieved “Big-shot” status in middle age, so now you’re listening to the voices of **DOUBT**, and **FEAR**. The agent of this temptation is none other than the **devil** himself. You began to believe the lies that “God doesn’t love you anymore.” “You’re going to run out of retirement money, and be left homeless.” “Some crazy disease is waiting to befall you, and you’re going to die alone.” **Forgetting** the mercy, grace, and providence of God that has seen you through all these many years.

Subduing The Pull of Temptation.

- When you understand how the **world** , the **flesh**, and the **devil** work, then you are able to get **VICTORY** over these areas of temptation.

1. Getting victory over the **world** you need “**FAITH**.”

Remember the “**world**” is the “**External foe.**” Notice: (1 Jn. 5:4) “**For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.**” It’s not just faith in the “**general**” sense; it is “**specific**” faith in Jesus.” Notice (1 Jn. 5:5) “**Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?**”

Remember, a worldly (carnal) Christian is trying to satisfy life’s hidden hunger with an ungodly system of values. A Christian is someone who has seen Jesus with the eye of faith, and realizes how wonderful He is. They have found their satisfaction in the Son of God.

Don’t forget (1 Jn. 2:15) “**Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.**” “**FAITH**” makes Jesus a reality in our lives, therefore He’s truly more than enough to satisfy!

“If your satisfied with steak, you won’t want the devil’s crumbs!”

Subduing The Pull of Temptation.

2. Getting Victory Over The **Flesh** You Need **“FLIGHT.”**

Remember the **“Flesh”** is the **“Internal”** foe. **Notice: (2**

Tim. 2:22) **“Now flee** from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.” We are not told to **“Fight,”** but to **“Flee.”**

Notice: (1 Cor. 6:18) **“Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.” Why should we run, and not fight? Notice: 1 Cor.**

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, so that you will be able to endure it.”**

Truth is, if your struggling to keep your mind, and heart pure, then **DON’T watch** that garbage, or **read** that trash. If your trying to loose weight, then throw out the “Little Debbie's.” Whatever is tempting your flesh **GET RID OF IT! “He who would not fall down ought not to walk in slippery places.”**

Subduing The Pull of Temptation.

3. Getting Victory Over The Devil You Need “FIGHT.”

Remember, the “**devil**” is the “**Infernal**” foe. Notice: (Eph. 6:12) “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.” Notice also: (James. 4:7)

“**Submit** therefore to God. **Resist** the devil and he will **flee** from you.”

You can use “faith,” and you can use “flight,” but against the devil, you better learn to **FIGHT!**

It’s not a matter of you being afraid of the devil, the question is, is he afraid of you? Notice: (Rev. 12:11) “And they overcame **him** because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death.”

So how do I fight? By confessing any, and all unrepented sin that would sever your “Fellowship” with God. **Make sure your heart is clean!**

Secondly, Proclaim who you are in Jesus name, not who you feel like you are, but who the bible says you are, and the devil WILL FLEE from you.

“You can know victory, and turn temptation into triumph.”