

# The Old Hickory Bulletin

## Old Hickory Church of Christ

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### How To Overcome Temptation

During His time on this earth, Jesus Christ set the perfect example for man to follow in conduct and attitude in order to please God. With regard to the perfect example of the Savior, the apostle Peter writes, "For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: 'Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth'; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously" (1 Peter 2:21-23, NKJV).

In the face of immense pressure, Jesus set the perfect example in the matter of overcoming temptation. Of this example the writer of Hebrews says, "For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15).

Since all are faced with temptation, all should look to the example of Jesus in order to overcome temptation. How can we follow the perfect example of the Son of God in overcoming temptation?

1. Quote Scripture. Upon beginning His public ministry, Jesus was tempted in the wilderness by Satan. However, rather than yield to the pressure tactics of the devil, Jesus overcame each temptation by answering, "It is written," and quoting an appropriate passage of Scripture in response to the temptation (Matthew 4:3-10). When pressured to engage in that which would violate the will of God, one can overcome by calling to mind the word of God in order to apply it to the present situation. For example, if someone tempts you to drink intoxicating drink, remind yourself of Proverbs 20:1. Or, if pressured to take revenge on an enemy, remind yourself of Romans 12:19. Follow the example of Jesus by using Scripture to combat temptation.

2. Pray to God. With the immense pressure of the cross looming large on the immediate horizon, Jesus withdrew to the garden "and prayed, saying, 'O My Father, if it is possible,

let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will" (Matthew 26:39). The example of Jesus indicates clearly that sincere, fervent prayer to our Heavenly Father should play a key role in one's response to temptation. Before proceeding in the face of temptation and potentially handling the situation in the wrong way, stop and pray for God's help in handling it the right way. Mindless repetition and insincere petition will not aid anyone in temptation. But the fervent prayer of one who seeks to please the Lord will be effective (James 5:16). Follow the example of Jesus by using prayer to combat temptation.

3. Walk away. When Jesus publicly claimed to embody the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy in the synagogue of Nazareth, the Bible says, "So all those in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up and thrust Him out of the city; and they led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw Him down over the cliff. Then passing through the midst of them, He went His way" (Luke 4:28-30). When the pressure was on, Jesus simply walked away from the situation. While you may not win the argument or get the last word in should you walk away when faced with temptation, you may very well keep from losing your temper and sinning. Sometimes the most appropriate response to temptation is to simply extricate oneself from the situation. Follow the example of Jesus by walking away as a means to combat temptation.

Conclusion: Remember, "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" (1 Corinthians 10:13). We can overcome temptation by following the perfect example of the One who never sinned.

- David Dann

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## Hezekiah's Prayer

At one point, when Assyria was threatening Jerusalem, Sennacherib, king of Assyria, realized he could not afford a long battle against Judah. In an effort to hasten their surrender, he sent an intimidating letter to king Hezekiah. In this letter, Sennacherib reminded Hezekiah that none of the gods of the other nations had been able to deliver them, and that the God of Judah would prove to be equally impotent (2 Kings 19:8-13).

Without hesitation, Hezekiah took the letter to the temple, spread it out before the Lord, and prayed to God. Surprisingly, the king did not pray for God to defend the nation as much as he prayed for God to act in defense of his own honor and glory (vs. 14-19).

The Lord answered Hezekiah's prayer by sending His angel to kill 185,000 soldiers within the camp of the Assyrians. Sennacherib, who had boasted so confidently against the true and living God, returned to Nineveh in stunned defeat. Later, he was assassinated by his own sons while he was worshipping in the temple of his god (vs. 35-37). It turned out that Judah's God was powerful enough to defend them, while Sennacherib's god could not defend him in his own temple.

Hezekiah protected his nation from their enemy, not by his might, nor by his military strategy, nor by his ability to form powerful alliances with other nations, but by his trust in God and his reliance upon prayer (v. 20). Likewise, our victories are not the result of our might, abilities, or wisdom. They are the result of our prayers of faith. Like Hezekiah, let us always be willing to take the things that trouble us and "spread them out" before the Lord in prayer.

- Heath Rogers

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## **Guard What Has Been Entrusted To You!**

"O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you, avoiding worldly and empty chatter and the opposing arguments of what is falsely called 'knowledge'-- which some have professed and thus gone astray from the faith. Grace be with you." (1 Timothy 6:20-21).

Paul's younger convert, his "son" in the faith and partner in heralding the gospel, was to give every diligent effort to see that he remained faithful to Christ: "pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness. Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, . . . keep the commandment without stain or reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ," (1 Timothy 6:11-14). The doctrine of Christ had been "entrusted" to Timothy by an apostle of Christ, which certainly indicated Paul's great confidence in the dedication, worthiness and ability he possessed. His charge as a "good soldier of Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 2:3) was to "guard what has been entrusted to you", namely, the faith (the gospel message). It needed to be guarded from corruption and perversion. As the apostle John put it, "many false prophets have gone out into the world." (1 John 4:1). Paul warned that "some have professed" a false knowledge "and thus gone astray from the faith."

Timothy was to preserve the pure revelation of God by "sound teaching" (1 Timothy 1:10). He was charged to "Retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus." (2 Timothy 1:13). He was to "guard" this "treasure." (2 Timothy 1:14). Obedience to the truth purifies the soul (1 Peter 1:22); obedience to a distorted gospel accomplishes nothing (cf. Galatians 1:6-9). The truth of

the gospel was being attacked by heretics who were attempting to corrupt it. In propagating their perversions they were accursed! Timothy's charge to guard it was not synonymous to keeping it from others by not sharing it. Faithful men were needed to receive and transmit the truth (2 Timothy 2:2). Timothy was such a man.

False teachers would not be successful without people to listen and support their perversions. Even Timothy was warned that listeners would turn their ears away from the truth: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths." (2 Timothy 4:3-4). Sadly, teachers can always be found who will teach what people want to hear. Some want to hear something sensational, some new novelty, something appealing to their imagination, something in line with their desires, and something that will not expose their wrongs. Included in these things were "myths," (fables, religious fairy tales which lack the substance of reality, fiction, not fact), "worldly and empty chatter" ("profane and vain babblings" in the KJV, words displaying absolutely no regard for anything holy or sacred, godless speaking, a seemingly endless flow of words devoid of significant meaning and spiritual benefit), and what is falsely called "knowledge" -- which leads one astray from the faith ("science falsely so called" in the KJV, statements masquerading as "knowledge," but false, without spiritual substance, without foundation in truth). Some of these false teachers may sound as though they are intellectually superior, but their words contradict the simple doctrine of Christ.

Paul solemnly charged Timothy to "preach the word" (2 Timothy 4:2), "accurately handling the word of truth." (2 Timothy 2:15). There were many things to be avoided in this endeavor: "fruitless discussion" (1 Timothy 1:6), confident assertions which were not really understood (1 Timothy 1:7), and "worldly fables" (1 Timothy 4:7) in addition to the items mentioned previously. All of these fruitless words that differed from the gospel of Christ must be avoided because they "will lead to further ungodliness," (2 Timothy 2:16). And as Paul had stated, it leads people astray from the faith.

During the past two-thousand years, how much chatter and false knowledge has been accepted, embraced, codified, heralded and reproduced which has the effect of undermining the efforts of people to hear, believe and obey the simple gospel of Jesus Christ?

- Gary Smalley

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\* "Feeling far from God --- WHO MOVED?"

\* "Finding hell is easy! It's at the end of a 'Christ-less' life!"

\* "For every decision, you either suffer the consequences or reap the rewards!"

\* "For every sin the devil has an excuse!"

\* "Get down on your knees and fight like a man!"

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## ***What Must I Do To Be Saved?***

### **HEAR THE GOSPEL**

(Romans 10:14-17; John 20:30-31; Romans 1:15-17)

### **BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST**

(Acts 8:37; John 8:24; Hebrews 11:6)

### **REPENT OF PAST SINS**

(Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; Acts 17:30)

### **CONFESS CHRIST**

(Romans 10:9-10; Acts 8:37)

### **BE BAPTIZED**

(Romans 6:3-4; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; Acts 8:36-39; 1 Peter 3:21)

### **LIVE A FAITHFUL LIFE**

(Revelation 2:10; 2 Peter 1:5-11; John 15:1-8; Hebrews 10:23-25)