

TEMPTATION

Reading: Ja. 1:12-16; 4:7.

Webster's 1828 Dictionary defines temptation as "enticement to evil by arguments, by flattery, or by the offer of some real or apparent good, pleasure or advantage; the solicitation of the passions." Our reading lesson describes the process of temptation in terms that are pretty easy to understand. Lust is a strong desire for something. It might be chocolate cake, a new pair of shoes, a swig of whisky, or an attractive person. We must be strong to control the lusts of the flesh. Thankfully, when we don't, we're assured in I Jn. 1:9 that forgiveness is available.

Discussion Questions

1. Since our reading lesson says that God does not tempt people, whose influence is at work? What is the objective of temptation? What is the difference between being tested and being tempted?
2. Read Mt. 26:41 & Mk. 14:38. What do these verses suggest about where the breakdown occurs when a person yields to temptation? What do these verses indicate is an effective deterrent? Can you think of any other deterrents?
3. Read Mt. 6:13. This portion of "The Lord's Prayer" asks not to be led into temptation, but to be delivered from evil. Are we able to deliver ourselves from temptation?
4. What does our reading lesson say is the reward for those who endure temptation?
5. How can something be tempting to one person and not to another?
6. The temptation of Jesus is recorded in Mt. 4:1-11; Mk. 1:12-13 & Lu. 4:1-13. Heb. 4:15 says He was "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." His temptations run parallel to I Jn. 2:16. Can you see these points in the temptation of Eve?
7. II Tim. 2:22 admonishes us to "Flee also youthful lusts...". Do you think we are susceptible to different sins at different points in our lives? Why might this be? Can you offer examples?
8. Read Job 1:1 - 2:10. Although God did not tempt Job, He allowed the devil to do so. Contrast this with what Jesus told Peter in Lu. 22:31-32. Now read I Cor. 10:12-13 and Heb. 2:18. What is this teaching us?
9. Despite all the devil's efforts, Job retained his integrity. How was Job's wife a source of temptation?
10. Job stands in stark contrast to David in II Sam. 11:1-4. Read Gal. 6:1. What do you think this is saying to us?

NOTES