

Triumph Over Temptation

A Lord's Flock General Assembly Topic

By: Fr. Peterson Tieng

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How does a Christian resist temptation? Temptation comes in subtle beautiful disguises to lure us. We are susceptible to worldly temptations. Therefore let us be on guard and alert to the underlying temptations of pleasure, possession, power, and pride. To win this battle, we must be equipped with the Scriptures, have self-control, and determination to refrain from being enticed by the cunning tricks of Satan.

1. How does temptation work?

1.1. **Suggestion.** It is actually a temptation of pleasure. When Jesus was in the desert, he fasted for forty (40) days (Matt. 4:1-11). Satan was trying to suggest or deceive Him to turn the stone to bread. Jesus did not succumb to his deception. He responded "man cannot live on bread alone, but need every word that God speaks." (Matt. 4:4).

1.2. **Delight.** It is a temptation of possession - having everything for one self, or an insatiable greed. Jesus was brought up to a high mountain and Satan showed Him the whole world. He said he will give it to Him if He would worship him (Matt.4:9) because he is the owner of the world.

1.3. **Consent.** It is a temptation of power and pride. The Devil took Jesus to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in all their greatness. "All this I will give you, if you kneel down and worship me" (Matt. 4:8-9)

2. Lessons from the Old Testament:

2.1. The temptation and sin of Adam and Eve. The serpent tempted Eve to eat the forbidden fruit to make them equal to God; the fruit was good (pleasure); it was pleasing to the eyes (possession); and it was desirable to gain wisdom (power and pride).

2.2. The Israelites demanded for a king to rule over them. God gave conditions to the king (Deut. 17: 16-17): he should not have:

- A great number of wives (pleasure)
- A vast number of gold and silver (possession)
- A great number of horses (power and pride)

Solomon was drunk with power and wealth, and he committed sins:

- He fell in love with 700 wives and 300 concubines (pleasure) (1 Kings 11:3).
- He received every year the weight of 666 gold talents (possessions) (1 Kings 10:14).
- He collected 1,400 chariots and 12,000 drivers (power and pride) (1 Kings 10:26).

3. The world has three (3) disordered desires (1 Jn. 2:16):

- 3.1. sensual lust or inordinate desire for physical gratification (pleasure)
- 3.2. enticement for the eyes: avarice, covetousness (possession)
- 3.3. pretentious life: arrogance, willful independence from God and other (pride)

Conclusion:

Jesus was able to overcome the three (3) temptations - pleasure, possession, power and pride, because He was fully equipped with the words of God. Similarly, the same three (3) temptations are presented to us today. A fallen man loves the world in selfish and disordered ways:

<u>Temptation</u>	<u>How to overcome</u>
Pleasure (Lust of the flesh)	Fasting
Possession (Lust of the eyes)	Almsgiving
Power/Pride (Pride of Life)	Prayer

We are called to renounce the world because it is something that threatens to consume our attention and turn our affections away from God.

Reflection:

1. Do you find it hard to resist with temptations?
2. Are you able to differentiate right from wrong?

Scribes Ministry:

Transcribed by: Sis Zee Fuentes

Edited by: Sis Jo Advincula

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