

Cleaning Fish # 5

Pray: Ask the Lord to teach you to help those struggling with temptation

Read: 1 Corinthians 10:13, James 4:7-10

"We love [Him], because He first loved us (1 John 4:19)." The love of Christ bridged the great gulf of sin between God and man. He was the initiator and we are the respondents. That same love is "poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us (Rom. 5:5)." This love will enable you to build bridges into the lives of others. Those who possess God's love must initiate contact. That love, wrapped in human flesh, can reach out to assist the new believer in his personal struggles.

1. What are the four things Paul tells us in regard to the temptations we face?
2. What part of this verse indicates that your temptations are not unusual?

No one is subjected to irresistible temptations. The same temptations that exist today have existed since the Fall. We know that temptations can be thwarted because there are examples of people all around who have resisted one temptation or another.

God knows our limitations. He does not want to see us fall into sin, and will not allow circumstances to "force" us into sin. The first part of our strategy when we are facing temptation is to remember that we can resist the temptation to sin. The second part of our strategy is to look for the way out of the tempting situation. Typically, this involves saying "no" and leaving. Other situations may require more elaborate (and maybe even painful) procedures, but we can rely on God's promise that there is a way of escape somewhere. Christians are no longer slaves to sin and we are not required to sin.

3. How does verse 12 relate to verse 13? (*Thought Question*)

"Pride comes before the fall" is a paraphrase of Proverbs 16:18. Those who feel that they are self-sufficient and stable on their own will often become careless and fall into a trap that they did not think they would fall into. Those who know their weaknesses will be more cautious. When they are tempted they will recognize it, turn away, and seek God's help to find that avenue of escape you mentioned.

4. Read 1 Corinthians 10:13 again and decide what you would tell a new Christian who is still tempted. (*Discuss*)

5. Read James 4:7-10 and decide what you would tell a Christian who has fallen back into sin. (*Discuss*)

The word "submit" here is a military term that describes how a soldier submits to his commanding officer. He is to obey immediately and completely. An important aspect of submission to God is resisting God's enemies, specifically Satan...

6. Read 1 Thessalonians 2:7-8 what was the secret of Paul's disciplining ministry? (*Discuss*)

For Paul, sharing the Gospel went beyond duty. He had a special love and concern for the Thessalonians. He went beyond merely dispensing the Word of God to investing and sharing his own life in the process. This way we may earn the right to speak into others' lives.

We should follow Paul's example in our own ministries.

Pray together; ask the Lord help you all to be a caring friend to new believers.