

Defending Against Temptation
Matthew 4:1-11; 18:7-9, 15-20
The Laurel Center
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Main Idea: Jesus taught us how to face temptation and beat it.

Introduction

One of the biggest threats to Christians is temptation to sin. Many pastors stress rightfully so that temptation is not sin. It is okay to be tempted but it is not okay to fall into temptation and sin. How can we avoid allowing temptation to overcome us so that we sin against God? Jesus provides teaching and his own example on how to defeat temptation before it becomes the reason to send. Jesus expects that we will follow his example against temptation and be prepared to battle against its dangerous results if we do not counteract it. Let's take a look at how Jesus shows us to defeat temptation before it threatens our walk with him.

Matthew 18:7-9

7 "Woe to the world for temptations to sin! For it is necessary that temptations come, but woe to the one by whom the temptation comes! **8** And if your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life crippled or lame than with two hands or two feet to be thrown into the eternal fire. **9** And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into the hell of fire.

- I.** Avoid causes of temptation (Matthew 18:7-9)
 - A The world presents opportunities for temptation.
 - B Our bodies are susceptible to temptation.

Matthew 18:15-20

15 "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. **16** But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. You're the only **17** If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. **18** Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. **19** Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. **20** For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them."

- II.** In front sources of temptation (Matthew 18:15-20)

- A We are responsible to help other believers with temptation.
- B Tab there is a system in place to address temptation.
- C Jesus gave us principles to defeat temptation.

Matthew 4:3-11

3 And the tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.” **4** But he answered, “It is written, “ ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’ ” **5** Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple **6** and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, “ ‘He will command his angels concerning you,’ and “ ‘On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.’ ” **7** Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’ ” **8** Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. **9** And he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.” **10** Then Jesus said to him, “Be gone, Satan! For it is written, “ ‘You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.’ ” **11** Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him.

III. Practice Jesus’ example against temptation (Matthew 4:1-11)

- A Use Scripture to defeat temptation.
- B Stand firm against the devil.

Conclusion

Temptation in itself is not a sin. It is when we give them to temptation that it becomes a sin. Jesus shows us both by example and through his teaching how to deal with temptations that come our way. We need not be afraid of temptation itself but we must be careful to follow his example and teaching on the subject of temptation. Let’s not give the devil a foothold in our lives when he pokes around looking for our weaknesses through temptations. With Jesus’ help we can be victors over every advance of the devil.