

# OVERCOMING TEMPTATION

DATE: SUNDAY, 12TH OF SEPTEMBER 2021 | WINNING THE WAR IN THE MIND SERIES: PART 4

## MATTHEW 5:29

*"Let's not pretend this is easier than it really is. If you want to live a morally pure life, here's what you have to do: You have to blind your right eye the moment you catch it in a lustful leer. You have to choose to live one-eyed or else be dumped on a moral trash pile.*  
(The Message Translation)

## HEBREWS 4:15

*For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin.*

### NOTES FOR LEADERS:

We're so excited to be back to meeting in-person again this Sunday! Book for one of our 4 services on our website:

[www.cityhillchurch.com](http://www.cityhillchurch.com)

Encourage your group members to book too!

## START TALKING

1. What one thing from Sunday's message is playing over and over in your mind?
2. What's more tempting: a lifetime supply of chocolate or an endless supply of coffee?

## START THINKING

1. On Sunday, Ed said that temptation is tailor-made for each individual. What do you think of the idea that the devil is waging war against us and would love to get us to give in to all kinds of temptation?
2. Some sins are obvious and easy to recognise, e.g. stealing, sexual immorality, lying etc. But there are less obvious temptations like pride and selfishness. How can we address these in our lives?
3. Read Matthew 5:29. How do we take charge of our sensory environment - what we look at or do - on a practical level to overcome temptation (e.g. social media, internet usage, films and series)?

## START SHARING

1. Share a story of a time when you overcame temptation (i.e. didn't give in to it). What was the key to your success?
2. On Sunday, Ed spoke about the importance of not living isolated (we need people to hold us accountable). Who are the people that you would speak to if you needed help in resisting temptation?
3. How does it help you to know that Jesus was tempted in every way but never once gave in to it (Hebrews 4:15)?

## START PRAYING

Lord God, Your grace for us is amazing. Thank You for always making a way out. Holy Spirit, please give us the strength to submit, resist, and overcome temptation.

## START DOING

This week, make Bible reading a priority, and identify at least one person in your LifeGroup/Church community who you can confide in and can keep watch over your soul (hold you accountable).

# SUMMARY

## OF SUNDAY'S MESSAGE

This Sunday, in part 4 of our series, Winning the War in the Mind, Ed shared an excellent message about overcoming temptation.

Temptation is something we wage war against daily, and for some who have tried over and over and never seem to have got on top of a particular area of temptation, there could even be a sense of hopelessness... There is no stronghold that the power of God can't deliver you from. There is no consequence that the kindness of God won't walk you through. And there is no past that will deny you a future when you let God get a hold of you!

If we look back at world war history, the allied forces came together because they had a common foe. Today, you and I are up against the allied forces of evil: the devil and his demons, the world and its ways, our human nature with our flesh and its lusts. These allied forces have a common agenda - to keep us down and hold us back from reaching our full potential. If they can't stop us from starting the race, they will do their best to keep us from finishing it.

These allied forces have many weapons in their arsenal, but temptation is one of the most effective weapons.

### 1. Temptation has you in its sights.

In Genesis chapter 4, Cain finds himself at a difficult place in his life, and he is contemplating some heinous sin, and God speaks to him: *If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it.*" Genesis 4:7. What a graphic image of these allied forces in the war against us! You are never too old or too young for temptation. You are never too spiritual to temptation. You are not immune to it.

### 2. Temptation is tailor-made.

Temptation has many weapons. Sometimes we look at the temptation that others face and think that it doesn't apply to us. When you look at stories in the Bible where people faced temptation, and you start to see that it's not just a forbidden fruit (Eve) or a beautiful woman (David), but things like glory, self-pity, lust, finances and money... the devil has got one that he's working for you.

### 3. Temptation is relentless.

Most of us think that Jesus was tempted 3 times (the story is in Luke, chapter 4). But in the opening of that chapter, we read: *where for forty days He was tempted by the devil...* Luke 4:2. Only three incidents were recorded, but He was tempted for 40 days! He was tempted in every possible way. The passage ends with: *When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left Him until an opportune time.* Luke 4:13.

### So how do we win the war against temptation?

*No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.* 1 Corinthians 10:13.

### What is this way out?

The way out is the grace of God. *For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.* Romans 6:14. We live under this theological truth: we live forgiven, we live reconciled. We are not fighting temptation to find grace; we are in grace fighting temptation.

### Three examples of temptation to learn from:

#### 1. Eve

*...the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes.* Genesis 3:6. Take charge of your sensory environment. Neutralise the strongholds. e.g. If your tastebuds have an overly fond affection for red wine, you shouldn't have red wine in your house.

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#### 2. David

*One evening David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of the palace. From the roof he saw a woman bathing. The woman was very beautiful...* 2 Samuel 11:2. Don't live isolated. David got rid of his peers that could hold him accountable and surrounded himself with people he could order around. We need to surround ourselves with leaders and people who hold us accountable.

*Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account.* Hebrews 13:17. If you are struggling in your war against temptation, who is holding you to account? They can't keep watch over your soul if you're not letting them in.

#### 3. Jesus

How did Jesus fight temptation? Every time the devil tried to tempt him, his response was to quote Psalm 119:11: *I have hidden Your word in my heart that I might not sin against You.* Jesus's weapon against temptation was God's Word - reading it and burying the truth in His heart. Jesus never relied on His own strength - He let Scripture do the fighting. We are going to struggle in the war against temptation without Scripture.

### The Word does three things:

#### 1. It brings clarity

The devil sows confusion, but The Word brings clarity.

#### 2. It brings conviction

Jeremiah 35:2 *"Go to the Rekabite family and invite them to come to one of the side rooms of the house of the LORD and give them wine to drink."*

#### 3. It brings Courage

*Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires.* Romans 6:12  
*Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness.* Romans 6:13  
*For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.* Romans 6:14

We have an eternal relationship with God that works out daily in a practical manner. Don't try to win the war once off. Focus on the battle in front of you. Fight each battle as it comes your way with the Word of God and the grace of God. Live victoriously!