

## Flourishing in the Workplace – 08 Temptation

God's strength is powerful enough to stop the weakest things of the world that tempt you. The one who defeated Satan on the cross is more than capable of breaking the snare of temptation in your life. You will never know the all sufficiency of God's grace or experience the perfection of God's power until you have experienced the strength of temptation.

Temptation is never proportionate to the strength you have in yourself.

Don't kid yourself that your heart can withstand temptation on its own or deliver you from temptation. There are traitors in your mind ready to side with temptation. There are secret lusts in your heart lying dormant, waiting for temptation to stir them up, and then they will cry and seduce you never giving up until they are killed or satisfied.

The ways of entering into temptation are innumerable and imperceptible; effective and powerful. Satan sneaks around the petty religious activities that we try to erect to keep us from temptation. Admit your weakness, admit your unwatchfulness, admit your inability to keep or preserve yourself; admit that your power is insufficient and earnestly ask God in prayer to keep you from the evil one.

Temptation is like a weed. You can pluck the top off the weeds, and your garden looks weed free for a few weeks, but then the weeds grow up again. Only when you pull up the weeds by their roots does a garden remain weed free. In the same way when God kills the roots of the sin or lust (e.g. ambition, pride, worldliness, sensuality) in your life, then you are permanently set free from temptation.

### Read

**Matt 6:9-15** 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
<sup>10</sup> your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.  
<sup>11</sup> Give us today our daily bread.  
<sup>12</sup> And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.  
<sup>13</sup> And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.'

**Prov 28:26** Those who trust in themselves are fools, but those who walk in wisdom are kept safe.

**Jer 17:9** The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?

**James 4:7-10** Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. <sup>8</sup> Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. <sup>9</sup> Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. <sup>10</sup> Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

**1 Cor 10:12-13** <sup>12</sup> So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! <sup>13</sup> 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.

**2 Cor 12:9-10** "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. <sup>10</sup> That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

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**Luke 22:39-46** - <sup>39</sup> Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him. <sup>40</sup> On reaching the place, he said to them, *“Pray that you will not fall into temptation.”* <sup>41</sup> He withdrew about a stone’s throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, <sup>42</sup> *“Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.”* <sup>43</sup> An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. <sup>44</sup> And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.<sup>[4]</sup>

<sup>45</sup> When he rose from prayer and went back to the disciples, he found them asleep, exhausted from sorrow. <sup>46</sup> *“Why are you sleeping?”* he asked them. *“Get up and pray so that you will not fall into temptation.”*

### Study

1. What is a food or snack item that challenges your self-control?
2. What is a temptation that you face in your workplace?
3. What does Prov 28:26 and Jer 17:9 have to say about us?
  - a. Why do we struggle to believe these verses?
  - b. How does James in James 4:7-10 suggest we should respond to the truths of these statements?
4. What promises does Paul make in 1 Cor 10:12-13 and 1 Cor 12:9-10. Share a story of how you have seen God fulfill these promises in your life.
5. What were some of the temptations Jesus and his disciples faced when Jesus was arrested and crucified? What is the difference between the way Jesus responded versus how the disciples responded? Why did they respond differently? (Luke 22:39-46; Prov 28:26;)
  - a. How might we apply this principles to dealing with the temptations we face at work?
6. What are some ways the world suggests for avoiding temptation (e.g. counting to 5 before responding to somebody, delaying gratification, or enjoying the anticipation)? How can we combine these principles for avoiding, with faith in God?

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7. In the chart below, identify some of the temptations we face that we may be able to resist by believing the statement from the Lord’s Prayer in the first column:

God is our Father	e.g. Temptations of self worth – Look at me, look at what I have done, I will never deny you (aka Peter), rich tax collector OR I’m not good enough, nobody loves me, I’m bored, I can’t do this
God is holy	e.g. dishonesty, immorality, ...
God’s will is being accomplished	e.g. God are you good? Do you exist, are my prayers bouncing off the ceiling?
God abundantly provides for all our physical, emotional, spiritual and relational needs	
God forgives us	
God enables us to forgive other people and place them on his hook / in his hands	

### Application

**1 Peter 5:8-11** <sup>8</sup> Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. <sup>9</sup> Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

<sup>10</sup> And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. <sup>11</sup> To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.

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Pray for your partner that God would enable them to stand firm in their faith. Pray that the God of all Grace would restore them when they fall into temptation and would make them strong, firm and steadfast. Pray that God's power would be manifest in their lives.