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## **TEMPTATION**

I. We live in a morally polluted world. Even so

A. Some humanists assert that there is no such thing as right, and wrong and therefore no sin.

B. In contrast, the Bible makes it clear that right and wrong exist. There is good, and there is evil. (Deut. 30:19,20)

C. In the universe, good and evil have been personified - God is good; Satan is evil. Good is equated with life and righteousness and evil with death and sin.

D. In the world around us there is pollution

1. Alcohol
2. Drugs
3. Sexual indulgence
4. Materialism
5. Power
6. Food

E. Sin brings pleasure (Heb. 11:25)

1. Removes us from reality
2. When it creates false peace and joy
3. In sexual release
4. When it enhances security
5. When it provides excitement

II. The world wants us to indulge in its pleasures

A. Worldly people do not want to rise to the level of the righteous man. They only want to drag him down to their level.

B. They do, therefore, use temptations to persuade us. They are evangelical.

C. They appeal to our human nature. Our human nature wants satiation of our biological drives. These drives make up our sin nature.

1. Sex

2. Food

3. Drink

4. Activity

5. Sleep

6. Pride

D. These appeals are made

1. Personally

2. In the media

3. By supernatural influence

4. In life

III. What is temptation?

A. To tempt is to entice to do wrong; to seduce into evil.

B. What is the origin of evil? It arises in

1. The nature of the universe

a. Some things are beneficial

b. Some things are harmful

2. The consequences of wrong are

a. Immediate

b. Delayed

C. We have three foes

1. The world is our external foe
2. The human nature is our internal foe
3. Satan is our infernal foe

IV. Temptations are, therefore, always assailing us (I Cor. 10:13).

A. No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful, He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear.

B. Temptations change in some ways with age.

1. Sex in youth
2. Pride and success in mid life
3. Security in late life

V. To deal with temptations we need morals.

A. They teach right and beneficial behavior.

B. They are from God for our benefit.

C. They are corroborated in experience.

D. The Bible teaches them in the

1. Ten Commandments (Ex. 20:1-17)
2. The Levitical Laws (Leviticus Chapters 12, 13, 14, 15, 18, 19, 20)

E. Blessings and curses are prescribed in Deut. 29, 30.

F. Jesus said he gave the law real meaning (Matthew 5:17).

G. We cannot obey God's law if we live according to our human nature.

H. We get the power to obey from the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:6-8).

VI. The trajectory of sin

A. James describes this trajectory (James 1:12-15).

B. A person is tempted when he is drawn away by his evil desires.

1. These desires are part of our biological drives.

2. When we are exposed to stimuli these desires are aroused -- some examples

a. Gluttony

(1) Real food

(2) Pictures of food

(3) Advertisements

(4) Smells, etc.

b. Sex

(1) an attractive person of the opposite sex

(2) Pornography

(3) Anything else prurient

c. Drink

(1) Seeing (young) people partying

(2) Advertisements for beer, wine or liquor

d. Greed

(1) Lotteries

(2) Casinos

(3) Promises of big profits

(4) Sweepstakes

e. These desires if indulged conceive and give birth to sin and sin when it is fully grown

f. Results in death (spiritual or bodily)

## VII. Mastering temptation

### A. Avoidance (I Cor. 5:9,10)

1. Not always possible, we live in the midst of it
2. To do so we would have to get out of the world
3. Associating with the right kind of people (I Cor. 15:33) -- Bad companions ruin good character.

### B. Develop spiritual community

1. Belong to a church where there is community
  - a. Where they worship in the Spirit
  - b. Where they have small groups
  - c. Or in a house church
2. Utilize the means of grace to maintain your power (Phil 2:12).
  - a. Prayer
  - b. Bible study
  - c. Communion (Eucharist)
  - d. Worship
3. Maintaining your power is equal to remaining in communion with God.
4. Know the consequences of sin.
  - a. On yourself
  - b. On others
    - (1) wives/husbands
    - (2) Children
    - (3) Friends

(4) sin causes emotional pain

(a) Sorrow

(b) Anger

(c) Fear

(d) Jealously

(5) Sin destroys trust

c. On Jesus

(1) He took our punishment (Isa. 53:5)

(2) Imagine how He suffered not only for your sin, but for the sins of the whole world (John 1:29)

(3) Do we want to add to His suffering?

C. Make sure your emotional state is healthy.

1. Our desires are affected by it

2. Anxiety and depression are relieved by

a. Alcohol

b. Sex

c. Food

3. Manage stress

VIII. Above all put your trust in the Lord. Unless you have a right relationship with Him you will not be able to deal with temptation.