

SERMON FOCUS: I must follow the Way out of temptation.

SERMON FUNCTION: The hearer will recognize his temptation and take encouragement in Christ.

BACKGROUND: Paul wrote this letter to the church in Corinth in response to some issues they were having.

SCRIPTURE READING: 1 Corinthians 10:1-13

INTRODUCTION:

What do you think of when you think of temptations? According to the Oxford Dictionary, it is "the desire to do something, especially something wrong or unwise." We can be tempted by many things, and I think that it is important, in order to understand what we are reading here, that we know and recognize our own temptations.

MESSAGE:

1. I MUST RECOGNIZE MY TEMPTATIONS

- a. I am tempted to prefer something other than what God provides. (Num. 11:4)
 - i. The riffraff among them had a strong craving for other food. The Israelites wept again and said, "Who will feed us meat? We remember the free fish we ate in Egypt, along with the cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions, and garlic. But now our appetite is gone; there's nothing to look at but this manna!" -- Numbers 11:4-6 (CSB)
 - ii. Paul is referring to this incident when he says, "Don't desire evil things as they did."
 - iii. They were tired of the bread of heaven and wished to go back to slavery for fish and vegetables.
 - iv. Our former slavery to sin can look appealing when we start to miss the things we thought were good.
 - v. Along with being tempted to prefer our past slavery over our current freedom in Christ, I am tempted to engage in idolatry.
- b. I am tempted to engage in idolatry. (Ex. 32:1-14)
 - i. When the Israelites didn't see Moses for a time because he was up on the mountain with God, they had Aaron make for them a golden calf and danced around it.
 - ii. These were not people who didn't know better. They had seen God work in getting them out of Egypt.
 - iii. All the gold that Israel had plundered from Egypt on the way out, they gave to this idol and lost it all.
 - iv. We are also tempted toward idolatry--idolatry of money, fame, political power.

- v. An idol is simply anything that competes with God for our worship. Even good things become idols when placed above God in importance.
 - vi. So, we are tempted to want things other than what God provides, we are tempted to engage in idolatry, and we are also tempted toward sexual immorality.
- c. I am tempted toward sexual immorality. (Num. 25:1-9)
 - i. [While Israel was staying in the Acacia Grove, the people began to prostitute themselves with the women of Moab.](#) -- Numbers 25:1 (CSB)
 - ii. The Moabites were descendants of Lot by his daughter.
 - iii. The problem with these women is that they were pagans, and led the Israelites into their false religion.
 - iv. 23,000 died as the result of pursuing sexual relations outside of God's intent for their lives.
 - v. People still die today, and face myriad other consequences from pursuing sexual relations outside of God's intent. And today, that is even celebrated in many churches.
- d. I am tempted to test the Lord. (Num. 21:4-9)
 - i. [The people spoke against God and Moses: "Why have you led us up from Egypt to die in the wilderness? There is no bread or water, and we detest this wretched food!" Then the Lord sent poisonous snakes among the people, and they bit them so that many Israelites died.](#) -- Numbers 21:5-6 (CSB)
 - ii. The people were complaining against God and those whom He had selected to lead them.
 - iii. When we complain against God, it is a dangerous thing to do. It is the same as saying, "I could do a better job of being God."
- e. I am tempted to grumble. (Num. 16:41-50)
 - i. There are many instances of Israel grumbling against God, and Paul is simply warning the church at Corinth to not fall into that temptation.
 - ii. We must also not fall into those temptations.

2. MY TEMPTATIONS ARE NOT UNUSUAL

- a. [No temptation has come upon you except what is common to humanity.](#) -- 1 Corinthians 10:13 (CSB)
- b. We have no new sins in this day that were not present in Paul's time.
- c. It is much easier to access a variety of sins now, and to be more aware of them, and many are more "socially acceptable" now, but they are the same sins.
- d. How comforting is it to know that whatever you are tempted by is common to people?
- e. Since temptations are common to all humanity, all people must learn to deal with them.

3. GOD DOES NOT ALWAYS REMOVE THE TEMPTATION BUT WILL BRING YOU THROUGH

- a. But God is faithful; he will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to bear it. -- 1 Corinthians 10:13 (CSB)
 - b. The Wednesday group has previously discussed this, but trials are from God for character development. Temptations come from our own evil desires within us.
 - i. Both are a chance to prove your character, not to God, but to yourself and to others.
 - ii. God allows temptations in our lives, but He promises that it will not be too much to bear.
 - iii. God does not always remove temptations, because they can cause us to rely on Him instead of our own ability.
 - iv. God does make temptations bearable, **and** provides a way out.
 - v. Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. -- John 14:6 (CSB)
 - vi. Jesus is the literal way out of our temptations and we must follow Him there. We must also lead others to do the same.
4. THE GOSPEL IN SIMPLE FORM (adapted from Dr. James Merritt).
- a. Bad News: We are all sinners separated from God.
 - b. Worst News: There is nothing we can do about our sin problem.
 - c. Good News: Christ did for us what we cannot do for ourselves.
 - d. Best News: Salvation and eternal life are a free gift, but you must receive it.

INVITATION HYMN # 311 Let Jesus Come Into Your Heart