

Withstanding Temptation

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One of the most painful experiences for serious Christians is temptation. Like searing arrows, these pierce us when we least expect it. These points are based on work in *Satan and his Kingdom: What the Bible Says, and How It Matters To You*.

Why Satan works in temptation:

How Satan works in temptation:

Ways to resist

Matching Satan's Lies with God's Word

Fortress	Scripture	Application
Deserving	1 Cor. 9:14, 15; 11:1 The Lord gave orders that those who preach the Good News should be supported by those who benefit from it. Yet I have never used any of these rights. And you should follow my example. 1 Cor. 4:7 What do you have that God hasn't given you? And if all you have is from God, why boast as though you have accomplished something on your own?	
Threats	Heb. 13:5 Stay away from the love of money; be satisfied with what you have. For God has said, "I will never fail you. I will never forsake you."	
Secrecy	James 5:16 Confess your sins to	

	<p>each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and wonderful results.</p> <p>Ps. 32:3 4 3 When I kept silent about my sin, my body wasted away Through my groaning all day long. For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was drained away as with the fever heat of summer. (NASB).</p>	
Super-spirituality	1 Cor. 9:24, 26 Remember that in a race everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize. You also must run in such a way that you will win... So I run straight to the goal with purpose in every step. I am not like a boxer who misses his punches.	
Just this once...	<p>Jn. 8:34 Jesus replied, "I assure you that everyone who sins is a slave of sin."</p> <p>Also see Rom. 6:16</p>	
Fatalism	Phil. 1:6 And I am sure that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on that day when Christ Jesus comes back again.	
Over-confidence	<p>1 Cor. 10:12 If you think you are standing strong, be careful, for you, too, may fall into the same sin.</p> <p>Jer. 17: 9 "The human heart is the most deceitful of all things, and desperately wicked. Who really knows how bad it is?</p>	
Excuses	1 Cor. 10:13 But remember that the temptations that come into your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will keep the temptation from becoming so strong that you can't stand up against it. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you will not give in to it.	

Rationali- zation	Proverbs 30:20 This is the way of an adulterous woman: She eats and wipes her mouth, and says, “I have done no wrong” (NASB). Job 40:8 [God speaking to Job] “Will you really annul My judgment? Will you condemn Me that you may be justified?” (NASB)	
Self- righteous- ness	Rom. 2:1 Therefore you have no excuse, everyone of you who passes judgment, for in that which you judge another, you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things (NASB). See also Romans 14	

The main points for us:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

15 Practical Ideas for Resisting Temptation: (abridged)

Simple solutions are usually inadequate when it comes to temptation. However, after considering the above carefully, these simple, practical ideas should help.

1. Face your temptation and identify it clearly. What are you thinking about doing, or not doing, and why? Admit this to God.
2. Ask yourself and God what you are being tempted to believe about your sin. What mental processes are making temptation harder to resist? What does God say about that in his word?
3. Discuss the temptation with God in prayer. Talk to him about it—thanking him for his grace, pleading for his power and help, acknowledging that even if you fell into sin he would still love you, and going over why you don’t want to fall again.
4. Ask God to reveal a vision of what your life could be like if you were free from this sin habit. What does scripture promise? Longing for God’s positive vision for your life is more powerful than focusing on the dreadfulness of ongoing failure. But consider that also: what are the

possible consequences of falling? Do we really want to pay that price for something that won't satisfy anyway?

5. Admit to one or more friends or your spouse that you are being tempted. Ask for prayer and counsel. Don't wait until you fall into sin...
6. Remember when you have fallen to this sin before. Did it really deliver the pleasure and satisfaction you were seeking, or did it leave you more miserable than before?...
7. Look to external, environmental helps. Agree to get accountability software or blocking software on your computer if you are struggling with pornography, and give someone else the password. Avoid parties where people are drinking or using drugs until you gain more control. Set goals with a friend if you are struggling with apathy or aimlessness and check back regularly to see how things are going...
8. Remember the power of habit. Use habituation to your advantage. First, realize that by occasional, even rare or partial compromise with sin, you are keeping a negative habit alive... On the other hand, time and distance weaken negative habits, so every success in resisting temptation brings us closer to release from future temptation. If you don't want to suffer under temptation, you have to begin winning these struggles, and win them consistently enough to break the habit...
9. Find one or more verses that address your area of sin and memorize them. ...pray that God will help you truly believe them.
10. Don't toe dangle! If you move the slightest bit closer to sin, whether sampling something similar or even spending time thinking about it, you are already sliding down the slope...
11. Find something redemptive and fun to do with your time immediately. Who can you contact for the purpose of building them up? What could you read that might help?
12. Don't stay by yourself. Temptation works best in isolation.
13. Predetermine that if you fall into sin, you are definitely going to admit your failure and be specific about who you will admit it to (ideally, someone responsible who won't just pat you on the back)...
14. Remember what preceded this temptation episode. Were there triggers that set it off? Maybe you can avoid one or more of those in the future.
15. If this area of temptation keeps coming up, you should tell a friend about that, and ask him to pray for you and to ask you occasionally how it's going. Establish accountability.