

**TRUMP
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TRUMP TEMPTATION

July 19, 2015

Sermon in a sentence: The word of God is our greatest weapon against temptation; use it daily.

Congregational reading: Psalm 119:9-16

Psalm 119:9-16 NKJV How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word. ¹⁰ With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! ¹¹ **Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You.** ¹² Blessed are You, O LORD! Teach me Your statutes. ¹³ With my lips I have declared all the judgments of Your mouth. ¹⁴ I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies, as *much as* in all riches. ¹⁵ I will meditate on Your precepts, and contemplate Your ways. ¹⁶ I will delight myself in Your statutes; I will not forget Your word.

Scriptures: Psalm 119:9-16; Luke 4:1-13; 1 Cor. 10:13; Gal. 5:16

Luke 4:1-13 NKJV Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, ² being tempted for forty days by the devil. And in those days He ate nothing, and afterward, when they had ended, He was hungry. ³ And the devil said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread." ⁴ But Jesus answered him, saying, "**It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.'**" ⁵ Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. ⁶ And the devil said to Him, "All this authority I will give You,

and their glory; for *this* has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. ⁷ Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours.” ⁸ And Jesus answered and said to him, **“Get behind Me, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.’”** ⁹ Then he brought Him to Jerusalem, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here. ¹⁰ For it is written: *“He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you,”* ¹¹ and, *“In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.”*” ¹² And Jesus answered and said to him, **“It has been said, ‘You shall not tempt the LORD your God.’”** ¹³ Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time.

We have just read a story about temptation. It does not matter how young or how old you are, no doubt you have faced this thing we call temptation. But just so we are all on the same page, let’s make sure we have a common understanding of what temptation really is.

When someone is “tempted”, it means they are being enticed, prompted, prodded or encouraged to do something they know is wrong, something that violates the internal voice of conscience within them.

To be clear, the thought to say or do something wrong is not a temptation if you really have no desire to do it. It is only a temptation if it is wrong and you really, truly, want to do it!

E.g.: You have totally messed up a very important project at work and your boss is coming through the door looking for somebody’s head. This is your second big mistake in two months and you haven’t even completed your probationary period. However, your

colleague who worked on it with you just went on vacation, so you can blame it on her for now, finish your probation while she's away, and then 'fix' your lie when she gets back. It took you seventeen months to finally get the right job, you were just able to rescue your mortgage from default and there is no way you are going to lose this job. It's just a small, short-term lie. And for sure you'll fix it later. Anyone in your position would do the exact same thing, right? God doesn't want you and your family on the street. Right??

You are facing – TEMPTATION!!!

Temptation itself is not a sin. There are many sources of temptation around us, but **we have not sinned until or unless we actually yield or succumb to the temptation and do what we know is wrong.**

So the big question is, how do we keep temptation from turning into sin? How do we Trump Temptation?

Trump: 1. A valuable resource that may be used, especially as a surprise, in order to gain an advantage. 2. To outrank or defeat someone or something, often in a highly public way.

As we go back to our text, we will see how Jesus did it. And then, let us do as He did!

Some people tend to discount the Old Testament as irrelevant to our lives today, but that's exactly where Jesus turned when faced with temptation. When Satan told Him to turn stones into bread, He did not go to the Ten Commandments to find one that said: "Thou shalt not turn stones into bread" – there is no such commandment. Instead, His knowledge of the Word of God allowed Him to apply a *principle* of the Word to His situation. Therefore, **we need to immerse ourselves in the Word of God so we**

can apply it as necessary to trump temptation.

Let us remember that Jesus was just as human as we are and had the same temptations we do. In fact He endured *more* temptations than we do because as the representative of all humanity, He was tempted in *all* points (Heb. 4:15).

In the first temptation, Satan came to Jesus with a direct appeal to His physical desire, His position as the Son of God, and His divine power.

“If You are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread” (Luke 4:3b).

He hit Him on three different fronts at once: a very tough and shrewd temptation. However, Satan was trumped by the Word:

“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God” (Luke 4:4).

Satan proceeded to **the next temptation, appealing to avoidance, human greed and lust for power.** All Jesus had to do was worship him and the whole world would be His. Jesus knew He would personally be “despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief” (Is. 53:3a). He knew all about the pain He would face and the fact that His closest friends would desert Him. All of that could be avoided by a single act of idolatrous worship.

How many of us would have passed the test and endured the torture of crucifixion vs. the ease of a little idolatry? In His humanity, Jesus could have told Himself: “Surely God understands I wouldn’t really mean it – it’s just a little something I have to do right now. I *know* He doesn’t want me to go through that kind of pain, since I am totally

innocent and don't deserve it! Instead, I can have the whole world at my feet, fame, adulation, money and power. Surely I can use all of that to advance God's kingdom!" This was a *great* temptation.

So how *did* Jesus respond? He reached back into His memory bank reserves of the Word of God and pulled out a gem:

Deut. 6:13 *'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.'*

It really doesn't matter what we face. Our worship must be to God alone, even though it may seem to be to our disadvantage.

Having been trumped twice by scripture, Satan now decided to try using scripture himself as a weapon. He took Jesus up to the highest peak of the temple and said:

Luke 4:9-11 "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here. ¹⁰ For it is written: *"He shall give His angels charge over you to keep you,"* ¹¹ and, *"In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone"* (see Ps. 91:11-12).

There are many ways people may try to trip us up, even using the Word of God as a source of temptation! If we have not devoted time to study and memorize the Word, someone can easily tempt us to act on the Word! For example, someone may encourage you: "... it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay." There are times when that Word is directly for us aren't there? *"Vengeance is mine and I will gladly repay!"* However, a better knowledge of the Word would cause us to remember that there is a little three-word phrase following, which is: "says the Lord."

We need to study the Word. The Word trumps temptation.

And don't think you have to be as wise as Jesus to know how to apply scripture to your temptations. If we begin with the Ten Commandments, they are pretty clear. We must not allow temptation to make us violate them.

There is a very good Bible word that will help us when we are being tempted. That word is "FLEE". Not 'flea', as in the blood-sucking parasite we want to keep off our dogs. The 'flee' we are talking about is where we pick up our heels and run as fast as we can, away from things like temptation.

Fleeing is what we do when we are scared to death of someone or something. Fleeing is running for your life! Yielding to temptation is sin and sin leads to death, so we begin by fleeing from temptation; sin is a killer!

James 1:14-16 But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. ¹⁵ Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.

Here are some very good 'flee' verses:

1 Cor. 6:18 – Flee sexual immorality (e.g. Joseph, Gen. 39:6-12).

1 Cor. 10:14 – Flee from idolatry.

1 Tim. 6:10-11 – ... the love of money is the root of all sorts of evil ... flee from these things (see also v. 9).

2 Tim. 2:22 – Flee ... youthful lusts.

If you flee, you will live.

1Cor. 10:13 No temptation has overtaken you except

such as is common to man; but God *is* faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear *it*.

There is always a way of escape.



This is not the way to escape. Temptation is not something to toy with, treat lightly, or take selfies with.



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We must flee temptation! Do not wait another second.



If we play with temptation, we will most likely be overcome by it.

Instead, we must immerse ourselves in the Word of God and hide it in our hearts:

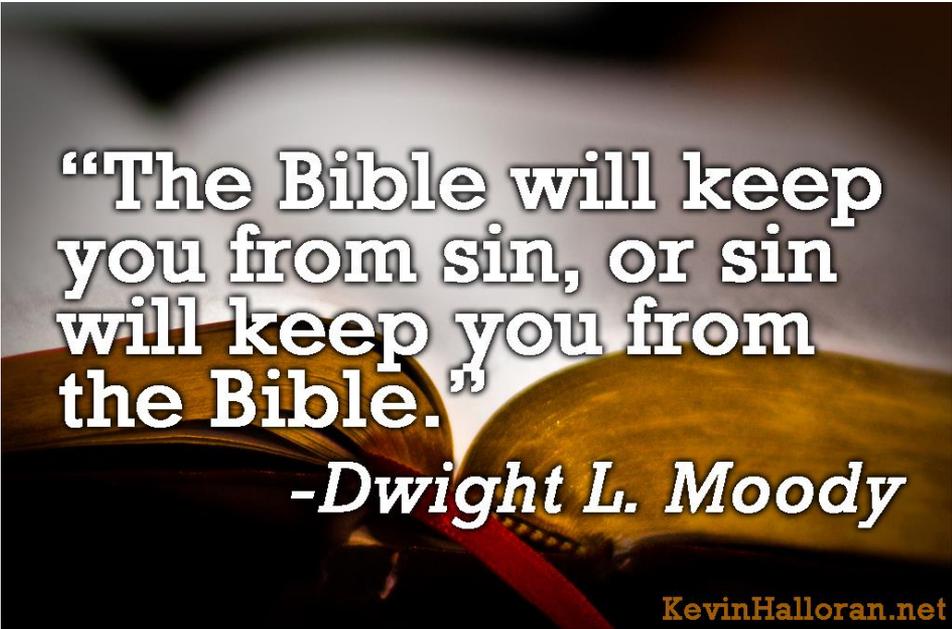
Psalm 119:11 Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You.

We must watch, and pray:

Matt. 26:41a **Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation.**

And we must walk in the Spirit:

Gal. 5:16 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.



“The Bible will keep you from sin, or sin will keep you from the Bible.”

-Dwight L. Moody

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Let us pray for God's strength to fight and overcome temptation, through His Word.