

## 1 Corinthians 10:12-22 (NIV)

**12** So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!

**13** No temptation <sup>[a]</sup> has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted <sup>[b]</sup> beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, <sup>[c]</sup> he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.

**14** Therefore, my dear friends, flee from idolatry.

**15** I speak to sensible people; judge for yourselves what I say.

**16** Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ?

**17** Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all share the one loaf.

**18** Consider the people of Israel: Do not those who eat the sacrifices participate in the altar?

**19** Do I mean then that food sacrificed to an idol is anything, or that an idol is anything?

**20** No, but the sacrifices of pagans are offered to demons, not to God, and I do not want you to be participants with demons.

**21** You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons too; you cannot have a part in both the Lord's Table and the table of demons.

**22** Are we trying to arouse the Lord's jealousy? Are we stronger than he?

**a, b, c**      [1 Corinthians 10:13](#) The Greek for *temptation* and *tempted* can also mean *testing* and *tested*.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+10%3A12-22&version=NIV&interface=print>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.google.com/webhp?sourceid=chrome-instant&ion=1&espv=2&ie=UTF-8#q=idolatry>

Good Morning First Baptist Members and Friends! It is good to be in the house of the Lord. I spent 22 hours in retreat with the Family Council of ABCMC over Friday and Saturday. It was a great time of sharing our stories, and our resources as well as planning for 2014-16. I returned excited about the work we are doing here and how God is blessing us. Yet I cautioned myself to resist the temptation to brag about how well we were doing in areas where others were suffering. It was in those moments that I realized how quickly temptation appears.

Paul writes to the church at Corinth about the seriousness of temptation, in particular the temptation of idolatry. Now it is easy for us in the 21<sup>st</sup> century church in Park Forest, IL to declare that idolatry is not a problem for us. After all we strive to keep God's Big Ten and idolatry is part of the first three.

<sup>3</sup> *"You shall have no other gods before <sup>[a]</sup> me.*

<sup>4</sup> *"You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below.*

<sup>5</sup> *You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me,*

But I wonder if we understand the meaning of idolatry.

Idolatry has two separate and distinct meanings.

1. worship of idols
2. extreme admiration, love, or reverence for something or someone<sup>2</sup>

Another way of looking at idolatry is to think about **anything** or **anyone** that holds a bigger place in your heart, your mind, your calendar and/or your wallet than God. Those things were things I already knew and things I suspect you know as well. So let me share with you a quote from "Desiring God" a frequent research website.

"What's your greatest hindrance to worshipping God as you gather with the church for corporate worship? I can think

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.google.com/webhp?sourceid=chrome-instant&ion=1&espv=2&ie=UTF-8#q=idolatry>

of a number of possible answers: *Our song leader isn't very experienced. The liturgy is too stifling. The band sounds bad. The preacher is uninspiring. Our church is too small. Or, Our church is too big.* While I don't want to minimize the importance of faithful planning, musical skill, and wise leadership, our greatest problem when it comes to worshipping God doesn't lie outside us, but within our own hearts. It's the problem of idolatry. What are some of the idols we might battle on Sundays?

Here are a few that come to mind:<sup>3</sup> (The following list is mine.)

Pastor isn't here  
 Music does not meet my needs  
 Service is too long, too short  
 No creativity, too much creativity  
 Someone's in my favorite seat  
 Someone's not doing their job the way I want it done

When those things and similar things get in the way of your Sunday morning worship and praise time then they have become idols. Paul gives very clear instructions regarding how to handle this temptation.

***Therefore, my dear friends, flee from idolatry.***

But idolatry is not our only temptation. In fact we have so many temptations that I think our time might be well spent if we reflect on the

### **THE WHO, WHERE AND WHAT OF TEMPTATION**

Would you pray with me and for me around this theme?

SHALL WE PRAY! God of heaven and earth, God of rich and poor, God of all things created, we come to you at this time asking for your Holy Spirit to touch us and move us and guide us and comfort us. We are so easily distracted by own agendas, so easily lead astray by the things around us, so easily provoked by the devils around and within. God we ask for an opportunity to hear and heed a word from heaven. Abba, I ask that you use me to preach that word this morning. Give me power and clarity and a pure

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.desiringgod.org/blog/posts/idolatry-in-corporate-worship>

heart. Thank you for the opportunity to come to you in prayer. In the name of your Son Jesus the Christ, we pray. AMEN and AMEN.

### **THE WHO, WHERE AND WHAT OF TEMPTATION!**

*<sup>13</sup> No temptation <sup>[a]</sup> has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted <sup>[b]</sup> beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, <sup>[c]</sup> he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.*

### **WHO IS AFFECTED BY TEMPTATION**

**Jesus**, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, <sup>2</sup>where for forty days he was tempted <sup>[a]</sup> by the devil. (LUKE 4:1)

### **DISCIPLES**

Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." (MARK 14:38)

### **US**

And lead us not into temptation, <sup>[a]</sup> but deliver us from the evil one. <sup>[b]</sup>' (MATTHEW 6:13)

### **WHERE DOES TEMPTATION COME FROM**

Just as we serve a triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit we are a triune people. We have a body, a soul and a spirit. Therefore, we are tempted on all levels.

**Our physical bodies** are always under attack. Just because we have joined a church, and been baptized we are not free from attack. Our old nature, our old habits are just waiting to catch us at a weak moment. And in our moment of weakness: partying on Saturday night takes the place of God on Sunday morning and becomes the current idol. In our weakness we chose food, drink, sex and drugs to try to satisfy the sad, the mad and even celebrate the glad. These are some of the temptations of the flesh – the body.

Temptation also comes from **the soul**. The soul is a way of describing our mind, our will and our emotions. The world around us tempts us through our souls. It is the world that tells us we need more – more space, more clothes, and more shoes. It is the world that tells us no one will know, no one will tell, no one will see you. It is the world that tells us don't just get even, get ahead.

Finally, **our spirit** tempts us. It is our spirits that worship God.

*<sup>23</sup> Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. <sup>24</sup> God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth (John 4:23-24)<sup>4</sup>*

And it is our spirit that is under attack. The devil, the evil one, Satan enters our spirit and makes us **doubt** and **deny** God. He sends someone to us with false doctrine to **confuse** us. He tells us we don't need organized religion and makes us **ashamed** to return. Satan, the devil, the evil one gets busy as soon as you make a move toward God. Why? Because he already has the sinner, you are a new recruit.

I have told you **who** and **where** and now for the **what**.

## **WHAT SHOULD WE DO TO FIGHT TEMPTATION?**

Since we are under attack from three sources we need three different strategies for fighting. Our strategies are called FLIGHT, FAITH AND FIGHT.<sup>5</sup>

### **FLIGHT**

There are some things you must flee or run away from

**6:18 Flee** sexual immorality! "Every sin a person commits is outside of the body"<sup>17</sup> – but the immoral person sins against his own body.

**Flee** the evil desires of youth and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

**Don't have anything to do with** foolish and stupid arguments, because you know they produce quarrels.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+4&version=NIV>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.sermonnotebook.org/new%20testament/temptation.htm>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Timothy+2&version=NIV>

**FAITH**

<sup>4</sup> for everyone born of God over comes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. <sup>5</sup> Who is it that overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.

You adulterous people,<sup>[a]</sup> don't you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.

<sup>15</sup> Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father<sup>[a]</sup> is not in them.<sup>7</sup>

**FIGHT**

1 Peter 5:8 New International Version (NIV)

<sup>8</sup> Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

James 4:7 New International Version (NIV)

<sup>7</sup> Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Ephesians 4:27 New International Version (NIV)

<sup>27</sup> and do not give the devil a foothold.

Matthew 4 New International Version (NIV)

<sup>10</sup> Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'<sup>[e]</sup>"

<sup>11</sup> Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

**THE WHO, WHERE AND WHAT OF TEMPTATION**

When seeking info we use **who, what, when, where, and why** .

The time is now to live for the Master – why not do it today!

<sup>7</sup><https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1JOHN+2%3A15%3B+James+4%3A4%3B+HEB+12%3A2%3B+1JOHN+5%3B4&version=NIV>