

Temptation - Intro

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[0 : 00] Finally, um, figured out what we were going to do and, uh, confirmed through a lot of things. First John mentioned about possibly doing a series on sin and temptation.

And we began to kind of pray about it and, uh, asked around and like, I asked three people last week and like three out of four is like something on temptation would be really good.

So it was just cool to see how the Lord kind of narrowed that down. Um, so we're going to kind of begin a long series on that. And tonight is going to be kind of like an introduction or overview of what we're going to be kind of going after.

So I invite you to turn to Ephesians chapter two. Thank you for praying for my voice. Those of you who were, I know a lot of you were, um, grateful to kind of return to me a few days ago.

So, um, thanks man. Water, not coffee. Um, Ephesians chapter two.

[1 : 04] We're going to start reading in verse one. I'm going to read one through five. And you were dead in your trespasses and sins in which you once walked following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is not work in the sons of disobedience, among whom we all once lived in the passage of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath like the rest of mankind.

But God being rich in mercy because of his great love, which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ. By grace, you have been saved.

Just pray with me for a moment. Father, we want to approach your word with reverence and awe tonight.

And I pray that you would work it into our hearts. Holy Spirit, those who don't know you, um, would be convicted of sin. Lord, that you would show them your grace and your salvation.

I pray that those who do know you, Father, would be strengthened through what goes on in the next few weeks through your word and what we share from your word about sin and temptation.

[2 : 22] I pray we would see a lot of victory as a result. Lord, I pray we would be doers of the word and not just hearers. I pray that people would just sit and come here to be cool and just learn something and go home, but to be obedient and to allow your word to saturate into our hearts.

Lord, we offer ourselves up to you. Be glorified. In Christ's name, amen. First of all, in this passage, we see some things mentioned.

This is Paul writing to the Christians in Ephesus, and he's looking back, trying to remind them of their past life, their past life that was in sin and in bondage.

And he's saying, you were dead. It's all kind of written in like the past tense, something that you were in. And this idea of what sin is, we'll just briefly talk about what sin is.

We talk about it a lot here. Hopefully we talk about grace just as much or even more as sin. But briefly, sin in essence is the word itself.

[3 : 33] A lot of times it means missing the mark. And we were created to walk with God, to glorify God, and reflect who he was. And we failed to do that. All of us sinned against God.

All of us. We've rebelled against God. And so we've forfeited the reason for our existence because of that, because of our sin. Because we were designed and created to know God, to fellowship with him, and to glorify him.

And so sin destroyed that. So we missed the mark for which we were created originally to do. So all of us, if you want like another picture of what sin is, it is giving our love and our affection, our worship, our adoration, whatever, and giving it to things that are infinitely lesser than God, unworthier than God.

And we've all done that. We've all loved many, many other things. And it hasn't been God. We've put people, relationships, hobbies, sports, looks, whatever, ahead of God.

And you follow like that trail of your time and your money and your energy. It's going to like show you where your God is. And usually the living God is not the one that you find there.

[4 : 48] And for this word here that's used in verse 1, it says we were dead in our trespasses of sin. Also used in verse 6, dead in our trespasses.

That word dead, it means corpse. It means that you were spiritually dead at one point in your life. And before you came to know Christ, this is what he's talking about.

This was your condition. It wasn't just you were sick, you were dead. And a desperate condition to be in. So, Tim Keller wrote this about sin.

He said, sin isn't only doing bad things. It is more fundamentally making good things into ultimate things. Sin is building your life and meaning on anything, even a very good thing, more than God. Whatever we have built our life on will drive us and enslave us. Sin is primarily idolatry. So, things that might not necessarily be evil or bad, we have turned into that by making them ultimate things, by loving them and pursuing them more than God.

[5 : 57] That's what we've done. All of us have done that. From the greatest to the least. And we're all guilty. So, the next part, we read in verse 4, But God, being rich in mercy, because of his great love for which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ.

By grace, you have been saved. So, God did not, like, leave man in that dreadful state, in the state of rebellion where he was going to have to judge and destroy man.

But, according to his love and according to his grace, he provided a way for man to be reconciled, brought back into fellowship with himself, so we can know him again, but ultimately so that we can actually live a life that can glorify him again, like we originally were created to do.

So, Christ came, died on the cross, lived a life, died on the cross, resurrected. And now, all those who put their complete trust and faith in Christ alone to have, like, a right standing with God and to be restored back into fellowship with God can have that through Christ alone.

And it's something that we can't earn, that idea right there of how it's by grace you have been saved. And it kind of elaborates even after that, after our passage. We are saved by grace and not by works.

[7 : 20] This was something outside of our power to do. We couldn't save ourselves. We couldn't improve the condition that we were in. So, God came to save us. So, the question is, for some of you, I need to ask, where do you stand?

There's not, like, a neutral time. You either have Christ in your life as your Savior, and you're trusting in him for salvation, and you're following him daily, or you're an enemy of God.

There's not one in between. And if you've been coming around Christ's family, you've been around Christian friends, or you've been involved in a campus ministry, BCM, Campus Outreach, Wesley, whatever, and you're hearing gospel truth over and over.

You're hearing things about grace. You're hearing things about who Christ was, the gospel. You're like, okay, well, that's cool. And then you go home, and you forget about it, and you wait until the next time to hear about it.

You need to know, like, you're in a serious state without Christ. This isn't something you can just put off. God's not waiting for you to RSVP. He's not looking upon you as neutral.

[8 : 35] Well, he hasn't responded yet, or she hasn't responded yet. So, cool. It's like you need to understand that you're an enemy until you come to Christ. Turn to Romans 5 really quickly.

So there's some urgency in this response. You need to come to Christ. You need to think about what you're doing and weigh the cost, but this is an urgent matter.

Romans 5, verse 8, sorry. Now, some people have an idea that God is all loving, that he would never punish anybody for their sin.

There's just such thing as his wrath or his judgment. The other camp says that God is only wrath and God is only judgment, and both camps are wrong. The truth is that God is both loving, but he also is just, and that he will destroy sin, but he's willing to save sinners.

Verse 8, But God shows his love for us, that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall I be saved by him from the wrath of God.

[9 : 48] You see that? We got, like, there's the love of God. Verse 8, the love of God on the table, the most purest, most awesome kind of love, unconditional love on the table.

But then the next verse, it says, So that we might be saved from his wrath. Both things on the table there. And Christ came to save us.

He said, well, I'm saved. You hear that a lot in the South. And you've got to ask the question, what are you saved from? And the answer is the wrath of God, the justice of God. And so if you don't know Christ, I beg you to come talk with me, talk with John, talk with Dan, talk with Alex, someone who brought you tonight.

Like, don't rest. It's been like, oh, I'll wait till next Thursday. Don't do that. You're in a serious state. And God is loving and he's willing to come and save you by Christ.

Read this next verse. Verse 10, it says, So you want restoration to God and have this forgiveness of your sin and relationship with God and a life that you can, again, walk with him and honor him.

[11:08] And Christ is the only way. He's the only way to be saved. So either in that condition, and you need to talk to somebody tonight, or you have met Christ, you have come to him broken and without any goodness of your own and said, I need you.

Please save me. I have no hope. I will follow you and I will do whatever you ask me to do. I will live for you and I will die for you. Whatever it takes, I will follow you. So, if that's your case tonight, then you need to be aware.

This is like a long introduction. Sorry. If you're a believer and you know Christ, there's two existing realities. You can just kind of write this down if you're taking notes.

Two existing realities. And for all you campus outreach, beach projectors, SLPers, you probably have heard some of those before.

It's not a new idea. But, they have this idea in Scripture about the kingdom of God. It means like, God's dominion, God's reign, God's rule being manifest throughout, you know, the earth, the universe.

[12:22] And, it's in a progress now, though. Like, it started when Christ came and it's ultimately moving towards, like, the second coming. Um, toward the fullness of the kingdom that manifests. But, there's two existing realities.

That, the kingdom of God is here, but it's not fully here. And, I'll give you one, two examples of this real fast.

Mark 1, don't have to turn there. Mark 1, 14, it says that Jesus came and he was proclaiming the gospel and he said this, the time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand or it's present right now.

Repent and believe the gospel. So, the kingdom of God is here. Like, right now. Like, me, Jesus, I'm ushering in the kingdom. Here I am. And then in Matthew 6, verse 9, we read this.

It's the, it's known as the Lord's Prayer, but it's really not the Lord's Prayer, it's the disciples' prayer. Because he's actually teaching the disciples how to pray. He says, pray like this, Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.

[13:28] Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. So, Jesus is like saying, pray that his kingdom would come, that it would, that his will would be done, that everything he desired would manifest itself here on the earth.

Pretty cool. So, the kingdom is here, but it's also coming. And the best analogy I can think of is like, it was really, really dark, pitch dark, can't see a thing, and the sun begins to come up.

You know, you see the sun, the sun is rising, it's there, but, as it's coming up, it kind of pierces through the darkness, but it's not fully up in the air yet, so, there's still some darkness that remains, some, you know, shady places.

That's the way like the kingdom is right now. A long time ago, the 5th century, there was a guy named St. Augustine, or St. Augustine, if you're thinking about Florida, the same guy. He wrote a book that actually changed history, and how we think about history.

You learn about him, some of you history may have probably heard about this before, but it was called The City of God. Pretty heavy read. I thought, I'll read that. I read that the first chapter, but I can't read it anymore.

[14:41] It was just very, I did read Confessions, slowly, but The City of God's intense, but it was the first time that somebody had said, history had a beginning, and it will have an end.

Like, it started with creation, and now we're in the redemptive mode, and then it's moving toward the second coming. When the second coming comes, history, as we know it, is over. So, it began to, like, people began to think that way.

History had an end in the beginning. So, this is helpful. Again, this was mentioned at Beach Project, some of you who went, but there's, you ever thought, like, what is the Bible?

What's, like, some of the main, a main theme or storyline that I can follow as I read the Bible?

Here's, here's four things really fast. This is, like, a process we see.

Starts with, number one, creation. Creation. And that is that God created man and all things in the universe perfectly. Everything was good. It was without sin, and he created it for his glory, all of it.

[15:50] Secondly, after creation, there was fall. Man's sin rebelled against God and destroyed his relationship with God, put him at hostility towards God.

It destroyed his relationships with other men. Our relationships with each other were broken and suffering and sin and death entered the world. So, that's fall.

So, creation, fall. Then you have, thirdly, redemption. And this is God's at work in history to restore man back to himself so that man could again glorify him.

And this really started when Christ came, lived, died, resurrected. That was kind of like the climax of that. And so, made it possible for man to be, like we just said, reconciled back to God.

And then, so that's kind of like in the place we kind of live right now, like in the redemptive mode.

Don't all of us are redeemed. That's kind of where we live. But fourthly, is a big word, consummation.

[16:58] C-O-M-S-U-M-M-A-T-I-O-M. Consummation. This is basically when Christ returns and restores all things and everything is made new and the new heaven, the new earth and everything is brought and restored back to its original form or even greater actually.

So, the kingdom of God is here but it's coming. And, for the Christian life, like right now, we're kind of like in a really unique period of time, period of history.

And, Christ has said, I will come back. And, he actually calls these the last days. We live in the last days. That doesn't mean like, you know, we'll get into all that.

Don't take it too far. It just means like, this is called the last days. Jesus said that. After I leave, it will be like the last days. So, we can experience as Christians, we can see the fruit of what Christ has done.

But, we can't fully see his power manifested yet. We still have, we live in the world, we see many, many things in the world. The Bible uses phrases like, you are saved.

[18:18] Then, like in, 1 Corinthians 1, 18, it says, you are being saved. So, this idea that we are saved and we're being saved. The kingdom is here, yet it's coming.

So, a Christian has to deal with a lot of things in this life that are not fully redeemed. And, this is going to kind of bring us to our topic a little bit.

I like our intro to understand this is where we live right now. We're not fully redeemed yet. So, if most of us are honest, and you get like a, guys, you sit down one day with me and get lunch or breakfast or girls, you go sit with somebody else.

I don't think I'll meet you but somebody else that knows Christ and another believer. You begin to share about your Christian life. I think most of us because it's just the truth.

Most of us don't live like in the victory that Christ has to cure for us. We live depressed, defeated. We don't, we don't, we live between fears and hopes back and forth.

[19:30] We hope our state is good and we kind of, we hope that we're doing okay but we're normally not. It's just like this idea that we just live in a constant defeat all the time.

So, though Christ has saved us, we barely, we feel like we're just barely hanging on spiritually. Like, it's not really good and we come to places like this, come to a worship service somewhere or a campus Bible study, whatever.

It's all smiles and you know how to like, we're really good at hiding our sin from people. Really good. I'm pretty good. Unless you know me really well like my roommates do and I know something's going on.

But, we're really good. Most of us don't live in victory. We don't have the inner peace, the joy, the confidence we should have before God.

We have a lot of junk that we're trying to hide. So, we kind of feel like, we're kind of like this ship getting thrown everywhere by a storm and just like crossing our fingers when we get to the other.

[20:35] We feel like we're barely hanging on. And that's the truth with me too at times. So, I have a letter here that a guy who actually attends John MacArthur's church in California and he's really depressed.

You can tell. And this is kind of like what he writes MacArthur. He says, Dear Pastor John, I've been attending Grace, that's the name of the church, attending Grace for several years and as a result of a growing conviction in my heart and seemingly temptations have come and I am powerless to stop and constantly succumbing to them in the talks with other golly men around me.

I have growing doubts that have led me to believe that I'm not saved. How sad it is, John, for me not to be able to enter in because of the sin that clings to me and from which I long to be free.

How bizarre for one who teaches in a Sunday school with heartfelt conviction, a trainer in discipleship, evangelism, a seminarian, a discipler.

So many times I have determined in my heart to repent, to shake loose on the sin that I have, to forsake all for Jesus only to find myself doing the sin I don't want to do and not doing the good that I want to do.

[22 : 05] After my fiance and I broke up, I memorized Ephesians as an all-out effort to make war against sin only to find myself weaker and more painfully aware of my sinfulness, more prone to sin than ever before, grabbing cheap thrills to push back pain of lost love, mostly in the heart, John, the best word that counts the most in the heart is where you live.

I sin because I'm a sinner. I'm like a soldier without my armor running across the battlefield getting shot up by the fiery darts of the enemy. I couldn't leave the church if I wanted to. I love the people. I'm enthralled by the gospel of the beautiful Messiah. I'm a pile of manure on the white marble floor of Christ, a mongrel dog that snuck in the back door at the king's banquet to lick the crumbs up the floor and by being close to other Christians who I hope to get some of the rich blessings of Christ, I come of an overflow, excuse me, I get some of the overflow and I ask that you would pray for me as you think best.

When I read that I thought like man I haven't felt like that before. Like I'm so lost. I feel like I just, I can't defeat the sin that's in my life, but I love Christ, I love the people of God, I feel like a pile of manure on the white marble floor of Christ.

I love to be around people who love Christ and almost feel like I can't get around them because they have such a good walk with God and I don't. This is how a lot of us have felt at some point and maybe even some of us now.

[23 : 46] So, if you're feeling this way, know that it's not unusual, okay? People that have experienced Christ and have been saved by his grace and have the Holy Spirit, this is typical of what you actually might think.

This guy actually doesn't sound like an unbeliever, he actually sounds like a Christian in Romans 7, he sounds like Paul, saying I can't do the good that I want to do. Nathan, our pastor, is actually preaching on that passage.

He started that two weeks ago and is still in Romans 7. But we're going to kind of talk about temptation now. And I have, I think, I think three things to look at, okay?

First of all, what is temptation? What is temptation? It's an enticement to sin. Whether arising from within yourself or an outside circumstance.

It's an enticement to take our God-given desires that God gives us and taking those desires beyond the God-given limits. That's a good way of phrasing that.

[24 : 55] It's an enticement to sin. Sin is a product. And temptation is like the selling of it to you. You know, you want to buy this? Come on.

You want that. It's an allurements. we may be seeking something else harder than the Lord that He doesn't want for us or not being patient for something that He does want and pursuing it like in an immodest, improper way.

That's what temptation is. It's the sale that's going down. So, I have, under this question, I have a few things that a good way to define something is by defining what it doesn't mean.

temptation. So, we're going to start with that. Some myths about temptation. I just don't know that first question about what is temptation. Temptation itself is not sin.

A lot of people, I'm just so sinful, God's angry with me. I'm like, what happened man? I was doing this one day and I was attracted to this girl and immediately I caught myself and I just turned away and I began to pray.

[26 : 10] I sinned against God. I'm like, no you didn't, man. You didn't like carry it that far. Like, temptation itself is not sin.

Here's what it does become sin. Temptation becomes sin when you act or you dwell on that particular thing. You take action on it or you just muse over it so that it controls your mind.

So, I kind of got into a little disagreement about that with a guy who started to say that temptation was sin and I just had to remind him about Hebrews 4, 15, where it says that Christ was tempted in every way we were, yet without sin.

So, if temptation itself was sin, then Christ cannot be the perfect Messiah. So, that was the end of that debate. Number two, number two, giving into temptation, and we're talking about from the perspective of a believer, okay, from a Christian, giving into temptation disappoints God or angers God.

God. What I mean by that is that you think that it destroys your relationship with God, that things are over because you sinned.

[27 : 33] Are you tempted? Excuse me. While the Lord might be displeased that you did sin, it doesn't destroy your relationship with God. You are accepted and loved on the basis of what Christ has done, and that's eternal, and that's unchanging, but just like, you know, last year, I remember I got into a really intense argument with my dad, who really had it out about something.

It was over something that was kind of a big deal, we just disagreed, and I was like not respectful, and I was a jerk, and there was some tension, hostility in my relationship with my dad, right, but a few weeks later, I just thought, like, man, I was wrong, and I went and told my dad to forgive me, and we were brought back together, and our relationship was not, you know, rocky anymore.

Secondly, or excuse me, thirdly, under this, believers, this is a myth, okay, believers can fall into temptation. I've been guilty of this before, but I've been trying to change my thinking for a while, okay, as a believer, you have the Holy Spirit, and you actually have been given the power, to resist temptation, and we use the word like, I fell into temptation, or, you know, like that kind of language, it's almost like, it got me, and you're almost like not taking responsibility, sin doesn't just happen, you deliberately sit against God, there's a moment in your mind where you literally cross the line, it's not like you're just like walking around this fallen guy, and you just fell in a trap, it's like, no, what happened?

So, believers don't just fall into temptation, and most deliberately step into it, and like, cross that line. So, number four, it is always best to run away from temptation, that's kind of a myth.

It's certainly true that sometimes the best thing to do is avoid things, okay? But there's a reality that in some circumstances, you can't escape.

[29 : 49] Things are going to happen, like temptation is going to come, so if your battle tactic is just to avoid every situation, you won't be able to always do that.

So, Martin Luther once said, temptations, of course, cannot be avoided, but because we cannot prevent the birds from flying over our heads, there's no need that we should let them make a mess on our hair.

So, this idea of like, things are always going to come, but we don't need to let it settle in on us.

Fifthly, this is the one I used to believe, maturity will eliminate temptation.

Man, like this dude, he's been walking with Jesus a long time, man, when I get to where he is, I won't have to struggle with this anymore, I'm just going to be okay. Not true.

Actually, a sign of maturity in a believer is that God is actually revealing more and more sin to you. Like, you can form the outside of your behavior, look good, God's going to go after your motives and why you're doing those things.

[30 : 55] He's never going to let you go about that. So, those are a few myths about temptation. But, first of all, also under this, know that temptation is common and it's universal.

It's common to everybody. Joseph was tempted in Genesis by Potiphar's wife. He got David tempted by Bathsheba and he followed through with it.

Joseph ran. And then Jesus himself tempted by Satan in Matthew 4 so that he would sin and not be the perfect Messiah that was needed. So, 1 Corinthians 10 13 says this, no temptation has overcome you.

It is not common to man. So, temptation is common and universal. So, it's not unusual. Second question. That was the first one.

My voice is better. My throat is going to be dry. Sorry. What are the sources of temptation? That's the second question. Right now, I think you're still in the Ephesians 2 and that's what we're going to look at.

[32 : 10] So, stay there. Back to our original text. There's usually three things that are the sources of temptation. And let it be said, you can't really section these off.

They all kind of work together in a lot of ways. So, I'm like, well, this day this one got me and that day this one got me. They kind of work together simultaneously a lot of times.

First of all, if you look at verse 1 in Ephesians 2, it says, and when she once walked, following the course of this world.

The first one is the world. That's the first thing. That's where a source of temptation comes from, the world. And flip to hold your hand in Ephesians 2, but I just got a few places for you to turn.

1 John 2. 1 John 2.15. 1 John 2.15. It says, Do not love the world or the things in the world.

[33 : 21] If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the desires of the flesh, the desires of the eyes, and the pride of possessions, is not from the Father, but is from the world.

And the world is passing away along with its desires. Whatever does the will of God, abides forever. So, the word world is used right here in 1 John 2.

It's the word cosmos. It means like the order or the system of the world. And it's used in this case like in a negative connotation.

It's not being spoke of in a positive way. It means like a world that's turned and is now alienated from its creator. That's kind of what it's used as. And it encompasses a ton of things.

False religions, false philosophies, ideas of man, just whatever. It could mean like even just the ads or commercials you see that entice you to spend your money on something that God would not have you to spend your money on, something that simple.

[34 : 24] guys and girls can mean like in modest clothing to entice or to allure the opposite sex.

The world is like the things that do allure us and pull us in.

It's the things in the world. So that's what the world is. And also it says it there, I'll read this back in Ephesians 2 verse 3 you can flip back there if you like back to Ephesians it says in verse 3 we're going to see the third thing verse 3 among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh carrying out the desires of the body and the mind.

So the flesh you got the world and now the flesh. That's the second source of our sin. And it means like if you're being controlled by the flesh it's like what does your flesh do?

It gets hungry it desires comfort it likes to sleep it likes sex those are the things that like are of the flesh and all those things are not bad things right?

Like they're natural things that happen but what the sinful fallen flesh is that it seems to allow those things to like dominate you or control you and run your life what you live for is to fulfill those desires that you're having that's ultimate and that's when you'll do anything to get fulfillment for those things that's why you know people that are just controlled by sexual sin it starts with this and moves with this and eventually leads to them raping somebody and then ultimately prison so you begin to let those desires control you and the flesh is fallen and it will die like your body that you work on and take care of every day like it will die this person because it has sinned against god thirdly you've got the world the flesh and now the devil you see that in verse 2 back in ephesians following the course of this world following the prince of the power of the air that's referring to satan the spirit the evil spirit of satan that is now at work and the sons of disobedience and all three of these things the world of flesh and the devil we're going to like discuss more in coming thursday nights it's just an overview but satan the word means like in hebrew satan it means like adversary or opponent someone that's like out to destroy you the devil another word is used another name for him it means like to throw or to hurl that's what the devil means it means that he's slandering you he's throwing insults against you he takes the truth of god and who god is and twists it and makes you try to believe lies about it let me see 1 peter 5 8 says this be sober minded be watchful your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour so the devil is this is the kind of thing that the devil would try to say to you or lie to you remember he's a slanderer he wants to like hurl up insults and slander against you he'll say you're the one who has stolen you've lied you've taken the lord's name in vain you've looked at pornography you've seduced girls you have allowed these things to control you you've lied to people you've lied to your parents you cheated this guy that's the kind of stuff that the devil will do is he'll remind you he'll like point out your sin and make you guilty and convicted and none of us are like above being attacked by him nobody he's been doing this a long time he's very good this is something

[38 : 33] Spurgeon said it's ridiculous to see on his Christian channels on TV all these dudes are like put it on Satan we've got you and Satan is really laughing but you've got to be kidding me this is what Spurgeon said he said about Satan he is more cunning than the wisest how soon he entangled Solomon Solomon is known as the wise man he got he made Solomon sin or tempted Solomon sin he is stronger than the strongest how fatally he overthrew Samson yes even the man after God's own heart like David he had been led to fall into grievous sins by seduction so he took down Solomon the wisest he took down Samson the strongest he took down David the most passionate we're not beyond his assaults so those are three things the world the flesh and the devil we're going to unpack those things more and figure out discuss what the word says about overcoming those particular things number three number three the third question what is temptation or the source of temptation and secondly question can we have victory over sin and temptation and so we have victory over sin and temptation the answer is a resounding yes you can without

Christ all you can do is sin period not one good thing those of us who are in Christ you can have victory over sin and temptation like right now like in this present life flip to I think you only have like three places to turn real fast flip to 1 John chapter 2 again excuse me yeah back to just a second ago 1 John 2 1 through 2 and John is writing to Christians and like listening to the language he uses he says my little children excuse me chapter 2 verse 1 my little children I'm writing these things to you so that you may not sin okay so in other words he's saying like you don't have to do this anymore pretty cool before like all you could do is sin period but now that if you are in Christ this is what he says I'm writing these things to you so that you may not sin like you don't have to do this anymore type language okay but then he says but if anyone does sin we have an advocate with the father

Jesus Christ the righteous he is the propitiation for our sins not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world so he's saying as a believer you have the Holy Spirit you've been given a new nature you're born again you've been given power from God God's enabling to not sin then he says but if you do like don't despair don't be like I quit I'm a miserable failure I'm not going to follow Christ anymore he's like don't do that but if you do sin you have an advocate of the father Jesus Christ the righteous so he's trying to remind you of like your ultimate eternal standing is on Christ not on your performance pretty cool so that's one thing there's a hundred texts to look at I'm going to talk about this more in the future but ultimately I thought it would be really cool to bring up this turn over to Hebrews 4 we're going to kind of finish in Hebrews tonight Hebrews 4 we can have victory over sin and dictation because

Christ has made it possible he has been there he has shown us the way chapter 4 verse 14 going down a little bit the theme of Hebrews is Christ is better he's better than the old covenant he's better than all the things that have proceeded before pointed to Christ as the ultimate fulfillment and here he's talking about the high priest who is one who is like a go-between a mediator between God and man and how saying Christ is the ultimate high priest chapter 4 verse 14 since let us So that's a powerful passage.

I'd encourage you to go and study on that one some more. We can draw near to God's throne in the grace of Christ based on what he has done.

[43 : 57] Before you had been consumed, his holiness would have destroyed you. He can't have sin in his presence. He's too pure, too righteous, too good, too loving to even look upon evil.

But based on what Christ has done, we can approach the throne of grace with confidence. So, some of us might think, man, God is so distant.

He can't relate to me at all. I don't understand. He's perfect. He's sinless. He hasn't suffered like I've suffered. He doesn't know what sin's like. Wrong. He does. And Jesus came here and experienced everything far greater than you have, actually.

And here's why. I'll show you a few things first. He suffered emotionally. He was emotionally, like, beaten down. Like, I can't imagine what he worked through. He was persecuted.

He was betrayed by his best friends. He was rejected and he was sorrowful. He's called the man of sorrows in Isaiah, prophesying about him 700 years before he came.

[45 : 04] So, he emotionally was afflicted. He suffered physically. He grew hungry. He was fatigued. He was thirsty. He was beaten. He was whipped. He ultimately was killed. He went through the physical suffering like some of us wouldn't have imagined.

He was tempted by all the forces of evil. They turned it down. You know, Satan, in Matthew 4, I'll bet either John or I will probably use this as a main text at some point about the temptation of

Christ.

He was tempted with prestige, with power, you know. He had everything. He could have had it, but he didn't. He denied it and stayed true to his mission, which was to come here and save us.

So, he was human. We talked about this. John 1, you know, talked about this, that the Word became flesh, Christ, and dwelt among us. So, he was human.

He went through everything that we went through. Okay? And like we just read here, he was tempted in every way. Okay? That's like a big emphasis there.

[46 : 10] In every way we were, yet without sin. Okay? It's been made, and this wasn't something I thought about when I read it. And that's a really good point.

Because Christ never gave in to temptation, he never did. That meant that his temptations were much, much stronger than ours. And the reason why is we usually like break in and capitulate before like sin has like brought its full onslaught.

You know, like it kind of starts with this, you know, like a little small enticement. And usually we're like, ah. And then maybe one more little thing, and then we break. And we're like, okay. So, we never really feel like the full run of it.

And an illustration of this is like, if I sat down and wrestled this really, really, you know, built, enormous, ripped dude. You know?

And like I'm arm wrestling this guy. We're just like shaking. And I'm just like in my mind, I'm thinking like, I can't beat this guy. He's got to break my arm. I just kind of like break and give in. And I haven't fully taken everything that guy had to offer.

[47 : 19] I just broke, right? But if I like beat him, like I absorbed all his strength. Like he brought me to everything we had. Like and I took him. So, like that's what Christ's temptations were like.

He never gave him. I mean, his temptations were far stronger than anything we experienced. He felt the full assault of it. So, flip over to chapter 12 now in Hebrews.

Chapter 12 is where we're going to kind of wrap it up. Chapter 12 and verse 1. Because Christ was sinless, he was able to be that perfect sacrifice on our behalf.

This is an exhortation to Christians here. Verse 1. Therefore, as we have been surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses. That's probably all the believers that have gone before us that are now in heaven.

Let us also lay aside every weight and sin which clings to us so closely. Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.

[48 : 34] Looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith. Before the joy before him endured the cross. Despising the shame and the cedar at the right hand of the throne of God.

We're only going to visit Tom there, but look at one part of that. This idea of the author or the founder of ESV.

Cool word there. It means a leader who goes ahead of a group in order to show the way to others. To prepare the way for others.

Speaking of military, you're out with a special forces group or whatever. You arrange out a few years. Figure out maybe SEALs or whoever you like the best.

There's a small team of guys. They're going on a mission. They come across this crazy ravine. They can't figure out what to do. They don't have time to go around it.

[49 : 32] They have to make a decision. So the leader, the commander of that group, takes a rope and he somehow, like as they were, like get it across the other side and get it wrapped around a tree or something.

And like at great risk to himself, like he goes out first. Kind of like goes and goes across the rope on the other side. He secures the rope and he makes it safe for the guys behind him to follow him.

And that's what this word kind of implies. This is what Christ has done. Like he came here. He went through everything we went through.

Had the perfect life. You know, went to the cross. Died on our behalf. And now he stands like the high priest sitting at the right hand of the Lord of God.

And he's like, I've shown you how to do this. And I will enable you to do this. I've come this way.

He's gone before us. And by his grace, like we can follow exactly where he leads.

[50 : 35] Because of what he has done, we don't have to be slaves to sin any longer. We have a new master in the world to Christ and not sin. So know that Christ has been there.

He can sympathize with whatever you're going through. He's not indifferent. But he can show you how to overcome the sin that is constantly entangling you in your Christian life.

So that's where we're going. We're going to be talking about a lot of different things. About overcoming sin. The enemies that we have to face. As well as like the weapons that we have at our disposal as believers to overcome sin.

So I pray that that will not work in our hearts. I can't wait to get into it even for myself just to study more on it. So let's just pray and kind of respond just from the time of singing together.

Father, if you had given us what we deserved, we would have perished and spent eternity in a dreadful state.

[51 : 46] Separated from you. Facing your wrath and your judgment with you. You sent Christ on our behalf. You died on our behalf. He was our substitute.

And he bore your full wrath. All of us who come to him and trust in him. To save us from your judgment. We can come freely.

Come by your grace. You did this not because we deserved it. You loved us. And you sent Christ on our behalf. Lord, I pray that we would, if they don't know you, unite.

You would work in the hearts of those people here. And show them their sin. Show them the cross. And let them not rest. That's a question unsettled.

Father, if we do, I pray that we would just realize that we don't need to win victory. We just need to embrace the victory we already have in you.

[52 : 44] The victory is secured. We don't have to just, the work is done. We don't have to do it again. So help us to walk in the freedom, the joy, the peace, the liberty that you intended for us.

And we don't have to sin anymore. And Lord, though we do, and though we can mess up, and we can commit things that grieve you greatly, we have an advocate with you, Jesus Christ, the righteous.

And we are secure so we can press forward with confidence and approach your throne. He's been there before us. He suffered, and you've suffered even to a greater extremity.

He overcame it, Lord. Now he shows us the way. He's called, in your word, our elder brother. He shows us what to do. He's our example. Help us just to fix our eyes on him and give us the grace to follow him.

I pray you would just use this series we're about to get into. Use your word to give us the victory in our life over sin. All to your glory, Lord.

[53 : 50] In Christ's name. Amen.