

PURITY AND TEMPTATION

FACING TEMPTATION

- We all live in a world of temptation.
- How should we respond when temptation comes into our lives?
- The story of Joseph gives us some biblical answers.



**GOD PROVIDES
FOR THE BELIEVER'S
NEEDS**

JOSEPH AND HIS BROTHERS

- Joseph lived a life of favor, but it was far from problem-free.
- His father, Jacob, loved him more than any of his other 11 sons, and he gave Joseph a position of authority over his brothers.
- Some commentators believe that Jacob intended to give Joseph an unequally large part of the family inheritance.

JOSEPH AND HIS BROTHERS

- Jacob wasn't the only one with plans for Joseph.
- God gave the young man two visions, each communicating to Joseph that he would be elevated over the whole household of Jacob.
- The 17-year-old Joseph acted as a 17-year-old boy would—he shared the exciting news with his family. Burning with jealousy and anger, Joseph's brothers plotted against him.

JOSEPH IN EGYPT

- Joseph's story seems hopeless—betrayed and now enslaved, the young man's options are limited.
- But in a destiny-altering phrase, the Scriptures record a turning point: "The Lord was with Joseph."
- God refused to abandon Joseph as his brothers had.
- Instead, the young man was given favor, causing all of his work to succeed.

JOSEPH IN EGYPT

- Potiphar, Joseph's master and captain of the Egyptian guard, noted this supernaturally granted aptitude and placed him over all that he had.
- Potiphar benefited from Joseph's relationship with the Father; he had God's man in his corner and was rewarded for his choice.
- The results of Joseph's work put Potiphar at such ease that he relinquished concern of every matter.

JOSEPH IN EGYPT

- Joseph would reflect on his brothers' choice and intentions: "As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good" (Genesis 50:20).
- Joseph's life is a testament to God's provision for the faithful; time and again Joseph relied on the Lord, and time and again God provided.
- It would have been easy for someone like Joseph to feel as if God had forgotten him.

MATTHEW 6:31-33

Do not worry then, saying, “What will we eat?” or “What will we drink?” or “What will we wear for clothing?” For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

APPLICATION

- Sin often enters the picture when the believer questions God's ability or intention to provide.
- Jesus instructs His followers to recognize that the Father knows their needs and will meet them; this leads the believer to seek Him first.
- Despite sometimes dire circumstances, the believer is never left abandoned or forgotten. God sees you and will take care of you.

**TEMPTATION
CAN BE FOUGHT**

CONSIDER OTHERS

- Consider others (8) - Even if Potiphar's wife was not thinking of her husband, Joseph was.
- The young man immediately considered the consequences that an affair would heap on to his master.
- Joseph considered the relationship and trust that he had cultivated with Potiphar and was not willing to destroy those things.

RECOGNIZE WHAT IS AT STAKE

- Recognize what is at stake (8–9) - Joseph had much to lose. God had blessed him with a life of influence and responsibility.
- Choosing to commit a sexual sin would have destroyed all that Joseph had.
- Destruction is exactly what Satan desires to sow in the lives of believers.

RECOGNIZE WHAT IS AT STAKE

- Jesus describes the Enemy's role in John 10:10:
- "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy."
- Believers would do well to identify those things that would be lost to the Enemy if temptation led to sin.
- 1 Corinthians 6:18–20 - explains that the Christian's body is a dwelling place for the Holy Spirit, intended to be used for the Lord.

REMEMBER HOW BLESSED YOU ARE

- Remember how God has blessed you (9) - The Lord was with Joseph, and His presence was the contributing factor to Joseph's success.
- Choosing to engage in sexual sin would certainly strain Joseph's relationship with God who had provided him the victories that he had enjoyed.
- Choosing sin over faithfulness risks losing the blessing of being in God's will.

PSALM 37:23-24

The steps of a man are established by the Lord,
when he delights in His way;
though he fall, he shall not be cast headlong,
for the Lord upholds his hand.

CREATE A PLAN OF ACTION

- Create a plan of action (10) - Creating plans for contingencies is wise; creating plans for inevitabilities is vital.
- Although it cloaks itself in different forms in different ages, sexual temptation has remained a constant throughout history.
- But just because it is persistent does not mean it is unbeatable.

CREATE A PLAN OF ACTION

- Potiphar's wife's continual pursuit of Joseph led him to develop a strategy to fight back.
- Instead of staring down temptation each day in the form of a conversation with Potiphar's wife, Joseph rearranged his schedule to avoid her as much as possible.

1 CORINTHIANS 10:12-13

Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

SEVEN TRUTHS OF TEMPTATION

1. Don't think you cannot fall.
2. Temptations seek to overtake you.
3. Your temptations are not unique, but common.
4. God is faithful.
5. God only permits what you are able.
6. God makes a way of escape in every temptation.
7. God will help you bear it.

MARK 9:43-47

And if your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than with two hands to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame than with two feet to be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into hell.

CREATE A PLAN OF ACTION

- In these verses, Jesus employs hyperbole to make the point that it is better to lose the things of this world and have a right relationship with God than indulge in every temptation the world has to offer and be disconnected from the Father.
- In other words, whatever might divide the believer's allegiance between the world and Jesus must be identified and removed immediately.

BE CONSISTENT

- Be consistent (10) - The Bible records that Joseph was tempted “day after day,” and “day after day” he refused to listen to the woman.
- Moral failure happens in the blink of an eye.
- Believers must develop strategies to battle temptation and implement them time and again.

RUN FROM TEMPTATION

JOSEPH AND HIS REWARD

- Run from immorality (39:11-23)
- Despite Joseph's best efforts, Potiphar's wife catches him alone and makes her advance.
- As she has Joseph by his coat, the young man's strategy becomes extremely simple: he runs.
- Literally leaving his coat in the hands of his pursuer, Joseph runs.

1 CORINTHIANS 6:18-20

Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

APPLICATION

- Just as Joseph ran from Potiphar's wife, believers today are to flee when confronted with this unique type of temptation.
- Joseph is rewarded for his noble actions by being falsely accused of scandal and sent to prison.
- In the story's darkest moment, we read a familiar phrase: "But the LORD was with Joseph."

