

Life of Joseph

Lessons in Humility, Leadership and Forgiveness

Dealing with Temptation

- Joseph was faced with a temptation when Potiphar's wife threw herself at him.
- He could easily have succumbed to the temptation, but instead he chose to honor God rather than seek pleasure for himself.
- Joseph's handling of the situation is a great example of dealing with temptation.
- The Greek word for "temptation" is πειρασμός (peirasmos) which can also mean a trial or test.
 - The cognate verb πειράζω (peirazō) can mean to test the quality of something (or character of someone) or to try to induce improper behavior.
 - When God is involved, the negative sense is never in view [James 1:13].
- All believers will face temptation...
 - Jesus taught his disciples to ask God to help them avoid temptation [Matt 6:13].
 - Jesus also advised His disciples to pray that they might not enter into temptation [Matt 26:41].
 - Jesus also explained that a time of temptation will cause "rocky soil" believers to fall away from the faith [Luke 8:13].
- Jesus Himself faced 40 days of temptation in the wilderness [Luke 4:1-13].
 - The synoptic passages in Matthew and Mark tell us that the Holy Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted [Matt 4:1; Mark 1:12].
 - Satan tempted Jesus for all 40 days [Luke 4:2].
 - Jesus responds to each of the cited temptations by quoting Scripture [Luke 4:4, 8, 12].
- Because Jesus came to this earth and endured temptation without succumbing to sin, He is able to come to our aid in time of temptation [Heb 2:18; 4:15].
- Paul warned the believers in Corinth that Satan will try to tempt us in the areas where we lack self-control [1 Cor 7:5].
- Paul warned the believers in Galatia to be careful about restoring a continually sinning believer because there will be a temptation to join in the sinful behavior [Gal 6:1].
- Paul was deeply concerned about the believers in Thessalonica that Satan might have tempted them [1 Thess 3:5].
- Paul advised Timothy that money can be a temptation that leads people who want to become wealthy into a snare that leads to ruin and destruction [1 Tim 6:9-10].

- The temptation itself is not a sin, but when we are carried away by our own lusts the temptation leads to sin [James 1:14-15].
- The good news is this...
 - The Lord knows how to rescue believers from temptation [2 Pet 2:9].
 - God will not allow us to be tempted beyond what we are able, but will provide us with a perfect conclusion to our time of testing [1 Cor 10:13].
 - If we continually walk by means of the Spirit, temptation will not lead us into sin [Gal 5:16].
- Conclusions...
 - Becoming a born-again believer through faith in Christ does not exempt anyone from temptation.
 - Temptation itself is not a sin, but succumbing to the temptation results in sin.
 - When temptation presents itself, we should keep our eyes fixed upon Christ [Heb 12:2] and prayerfully seek the Lord's ability to endure.
 - If we fail to do so and temptation leads us into sin, then we need to confess our sins and be restored to fellowship as quickly as possible [1 John 1:9].
 - It is helpful to remember that God has provided us with everything we need for life and godliness [2 Pet 1:3] and that temptation has no power over the Holy Spirit who dwells within us [1 John 4:4].
 - The importance of the word of God dwelling richly in the soul of the believer [Col 3:16] cannot be overstated as we can clearly see from the example of Jesus' testing in the wilderness.
 - It is this resource pool of Bible doctrine that the Holy Spirit calls upon to help us endure whatever temptations we may face in this life.