

Saturday/Sunday, August 9-10, 2008

## TEMPTATION

### “Escape Routes”

1 Corinthians 10:13

#### INTRODUCE THEME

Review last week: temptation is inescapable; inside job “evil desires”; not sin but it can lead to destruction if we get trapped in it (ant lion).

Jesus tempted in every way ... so He can help those who are tempted; He gets it and He can and will provide ways for you to escape from giving in to what tempts you so that you can live the life He died for you to experience.

#### 1. What does it mean to “escape” temptation?

*(1 Cor. 10:13) No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.*

What tempts you is common, experienced by others, you are not alone.

Escaping temptation is possible because of God’s faithfulness; it is one of His good and perfect gifts to you because He wants you to win.

He will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you can handle; before we get overwhelmed He promises to provide a way out (exit, escape, getaway); that will give us power to “stand under” = persevere, endure, hang in there w/out giving in and sinning.

The temptation may not go away but its power and influence over us will be reduced; we will grow up.

So ... when tempted, God not only empowers you to resist temptation but grows and develops you in the “resisting” process.

#### 2. What are some of the escape “routes” (exits) that God provides?

Wow, did I get blown away this week by all of the ways out; can’t look at all of them; skim stone so that you can see some for your life today.

How are you tempted? Anxiety, sexual lust, anger, envy, jealousy, words that tear down, doubt, to run, retreat, procrastinate, nagging habits, etc.

It is probable that you are going to identify with some of the escape routes mentioned. It is also likely that one of those mentioned is going to be one you need to take now or in the near future. So, listen carefully.

God provides a way of escape when we ...

- **Learn from PAST failures/blessings, yours and others**

See this described v. 1-11: Hebrews, Moses, Egypt, lead out and to promise land; through sea, without knowing where to go, 10 Commandments, numerous miracles along the way.

Temptations often come after spiritual/personal success.

Even with God’s close, personal involvement they became consumed with self centeredness, leading to sexual immorality, idolatry, testing God, complaining; discipline came swiftly.

They had become an example of what not to do and a warning to everyone who followed; what to do and what not to do.

Their biggest mistake: forgot, began to take for granted Who God was and what He was doing in their lives.

To remain sensitive to God’s ways of escape from temptation take time to reflect, meditate, remember Who God is and what He has done and is doing in your life and the life of others. (in office today)

Remembering past failures and past blessings is one way of escape that will enable you to stand firm against temptations desire for you.

- **Understand your VULNERABILITIES**

What can we learn from what happened to the Hebrews?

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

You are not invincible; you have weak spots, vulnerabilities that are unusually susceptible to temptation and sin. Inside vulnerabilities.

The minute we begin to believe our own press we are in trouble. We can all fall and fall big time. (John Edwards)

Know your weak spots, talk about them, it will make you stronger.

(2 Cor. 12:10) *"For when I am weak, then I am strong."*

God also provides a way of escape through ...

- **SUFFERING ... you're joking right?**

(v. 13) *He will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under [endure, persevere, not buried] it.*

The way out provided may not remove temptation but instead give you power to keep resisting ... this will often be a real struggle, fight. And that is just fine.

(1 Peter 4:1-2) *Therefore, since Christ suffered in His body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because **he who has suffered in his body is done with sin**. As a result, he does not live the rest of his earthly life for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God.*

How many want to be done with sin ... live for the will of God?

How many are willing to suffer, resist, keep saying no to your own evil desires in order to do this?

The person who chooses to say no to his own desires will be associated with this kind of suffering, just like the One they are following.

- **Avoid "obvious" DANGER zones!** (Proverbs 7:7-9)

(Proverbs 4:25-27) *Let your eyes look straight ahead, fix your gaze directly before you. Make level paths for your feet and take only ways that are firm. Do not swerve to the right or the left; keep your foot from evil.*

Avoid people, places, settings, places; external danger zones (give examples)

[ILL: When going somewhere feeling uncomfortable, don't go; my early years; talks with guys about internet and tempt to pornography; people who are negative and critical and you find that you can't seem to say no]

- **RUN fast, RUN now!** (1 Corinthians 6:18, 10:14, 1 Timothy 6:11)

Flee (sexual immorality, idolatry, greed); imperative, seek safety by flight

Don't try to see if you are strong enough (you're not), if you can think your way out (you can't), if you can taste just a little and be ok you can't) (my early years, examples today)

Jesus said, *"If hand causes sin, cut it off; if eye causes sin, take it out."* (Matthew 5:29-30)

If you're in one of these situations; don't try to be strong enough; you may need to run fast, run now.

- **Take the first EXIT; it gets more difficult later.** (Romans 8:5)

Modesto next six exits ... take the first, not the last. Taking the exit gets more difficult as you pass each one.

- **Spiritual FRIENDSHIP!** (read Ecclesiastes 4:9-12, Hebrews 3:13)

(Hebrews 3:13, NLT) *You must warn each other every day, as long as it is called “today,” so that none of you will be deceived by sin and hardened against God.*

- **BIBLE warfare!** (Matthew 4:1-11, Ephesians 6:17)

(Psalm 119:9, 11, NLT) *How can a young person stay pure? By obeying Your Word and following its rules ... I have hidden Your Word in my heart, that I might not sin against You.*

[ILL: my anxiety 1Peter 5:7, Phil. 4:6-7; sin 1 John 1:9]

Find scriptures that speak to your struggle against temptation. Memorize, read, write out, share with another.

- **Keep your eye on the PRIZE!** (Philippians 3:14, Hebrews 12:11)

(Hebrews 12:2, 11) *Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, Who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God..*

(1 Corinthians 9:24-27) *Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.*

Heaven – see Jesus face to face, be like Him, no more sin, no more selfishness, life as it was originally meant to be with God, within ourselves, with one another.

*Heaven* by Randy Alcorn, where sin no longer exists, life like we’ve never known it ... don’t let go of this future reality.

## Closing comments

(Hebrews 4:14-16) *Therefore, since we have a great high priest Who has gone through the Heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have One Who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.*

Make it personal: So what tempts you? Can you identify with one or more of the escape routes that God provides?

Do you “usually” take the escape that God provides? Is there an area where you often choose to follow after the temptation instead of resisting?

Do you want to change this pattern?

Invitation/Prayer