

## TEMPTATION TACTICS

Friday, March 6

Reading: James 4:7-10 / Ephesians 6:10-20

**James 4:7** *Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Come near to God and He will come near to you.*

There are two extremes among Christians in how they think of Satan and his evil forces. One is to downplay or even deny that they exist. At the other extreme are those who see demons under every rock and behind every tree. Both extremes are dangerous. One gives Satan too much credit and the first does not give him enough! The prayer to “Deliver us from evil” does not mean that we sit back and ignore the tools and commands God has given us. When speaking of temptation, the New Testament tells us three things:

### FLEE

2 Timothy 2:22 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.

We all have areas where we know we are particularly vulnerable to temptation – certain sins that have a stronger pull on us than others. We need to flee from the people, places, and activities that strongly tempt us to sin. We have no right to place ourselves in these dangerous situations where we know we are most vulnerable. Paul tells believer that we are to “walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh” (Galatians 5:16).

### RESIST

James 4:7 Submit yourselves to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Sometimes temptation comes unannounced and unexpected. In these situations, God tells us to resist! Look at James 4:7-10 again. While resisting Satan is mentioned once, our relationship with God is emphasized over and over. We are told to SUBMIT and COME NEAR to God, to PURIFY our heart, and HUMBLE ourselves before the Lord. (for further discussion, look at 1 Peter 5:6-11)

### STAND

Ephesians 6:10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power. 11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes...13 Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.

This final command is the call to stand against evil – not in our own strength, but in the power of God. The armor of God does not come from human strength. Truth, righteousness, the gospel of peace, faith, and salvation are given by God and is for our defense. Paul uses the picture of armor to remind us to be ready to fight in God’s strength. The armor is defensive to protect our mind (helmet), heart (breastplate), and soul (shield). The only weapon mentioned (sword) is the Word of God. When Jesus was tempted, He quoted Scripture to resist Satan (Matthew 4). This is what Psalm 119:11 tells us: “I have hidden Your word in my heart that I might not sin against You.” The gospel (shoes) and truth (belt) are our best defense against the lies of the enemy. Paul closes this list by stressing the importance of prayer. How do we stand against Satan and the evil forces of this world? We rely on God’s strength and God’s Word and keep on praying!

When you are tempted, how do you respond? What were the results? How can you flee, resist, and stand in victory the next time sin attacks? Where do you need God to deliver you from evil?