

TESTING AND TEMPTATION

August 31, 2025

Mike Newman, Senior Pastor

UNDERSTANDING THE SOURCE AND PURPOSE OF OUR DIFFICULTIES CHANGES EVERYTHING ABOUT HOW WE HANDLE THEM.

1) There are many different reasons why we experience challenges in life.

a) Some challenges are a result of living in a fallen world.

Genesis 3:17–19 (NLT) (17) And to the man he said, “Since you listened to your wife and ate from the tree whose fruit I commanded you not to eat, the ground is cursed because of you. All your life you will struggle to scratch a living from it. (18) It will grow thorns and thistles for you, though you will eat of its grains. (19) By the sweat of your brow will you have food to eat until you return to the ground from which you were made. For you were made from dust, and to dust you will return.”

b) Some are an attack of the devil and the forces of evil.

1 Peter 5:8 (NLT) (8) Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour.

Ephesians 6:11 (NLT) (11) Put on all of God’s armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil.

c) Some challenges are the consequences of our own sin and/or the sins of others.

d) Some challenges are God testing the depth of our faith.

>> See Genesis 22

Deuteronomy 8:2 (NLT) (2) Remember how the LORD your God led you through the wilderness for these forty years, humbling you and testing you to prove your character, and to find out whether or not you would obey his commands.

2) Any circumstance or challenge we face can become a test to deepen our faith or a temptation that can lead to sin.

James 1:12–15 (NLT) (12) God blesses those who patiently endure testing and temptation. Afterward they will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him. (13) And remember, when you are being tempted, do not say, “God is tempting me.” God is never tempted to do wrong, and he never tempts anyone else. (14) Temptation comes from our own desires, which entice us and drag us away. (15) These desires give birth to sinful actions. And when sin is allowed to grow, it gives birth to death.

1 Corinthians 10:13 (NLT) (13) The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure.

3) God provides the resources we need to respond the right way to every challenge and circumstance.

2 Peter 1:3 (NLT) (3) By his divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. We have received all of this by coming to know him, the one who called us to himself by means of his marvelous glory and excellence.

a) Scripture

2 Timothy 3:16–17 (NLT) (16) All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. (17) God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.

Hebrews 4:12 (NLT) (12) For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires.

b) Prayer

Philippians 4:6–7 (NLT) (6) Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. (7) Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

c) Holy Spirit

John 16:13 (NLT) (13) When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own but will tell you what he has heard. He will tell you about the future.

Romans 8:26 (NLT) (26) And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words.

d) The Church

4) Choose to dwell on God's promises and have His perspective in every circumstance and challenge you face.

John 16:33 (NLT) (33) I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world."

1 Peter 1:6–7 (NLT) (6) So be truly glad. There is wonderful joy ahead, even though you must endure many trials for a little while. (7) These trials will show that your faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold—though your faith is far more precious than mere gold. So when your faith remains strong through many trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world.

*For more information about what it means to begin a relationship with Jesus or what to do after making a decision to follow Him, stop at Guest Central in the lobby following the service, email us at info@otterbeinchurch.org, or call the church office at 717.762.7147 to set up an appointment. You may also learn more about what it means to follow Jesus and/or request materials and find additional information to help you on your spiritual journey by clicking "**Next Steps > Jesus**" on our website at www.otterbeinchurch.org.*