

Out of Context
No More Than You Can Handle- Session #5
Small Group Notes

Introduction:

What is one historical mistake or problem you wish you could go back and change? What is one that you hope to never repeat again?

What are some things that you have been confused about regarding temptation before today?

What is your greatest challenge when it comes to addressing temptation today?

In today's discussion we are going to see the difference between temptation and trials. There are many that will read 1 Corinthians 10 and make a reference to it being in relationship to trials that we may face. For example, we will think that God will not allow us to go through a difficult situation because He will not give us more than we can bear or handle. This is simply not true. Rather, when we read the full context of 1 Corinthians 10, we see that it is in relationship to temptations. God will always provide a way for us to escape temptation, if we choose to do so. God will also never be the one to give us temptation. He allows temptation to occur as a part of us having the will to either choose to obey or not.

Discuss:

1. Read James 1:13-18

It's important for us to understand some base truths about the essence of temptation. First, we all have something that we are tempted by. James shows how we all have desires and that those desires can lead us either closer to Christ or towards sin. Second, God is faithful, and he will not desert his people (see Deut. 7:9; 1 Thess. 5:24; Heb. 10:23; Rev. 1:5). He himself tempts no one (Jas. 1:13), but he is in control of Satan, who tempts believers to sin (Matt. 4:1; 6:13).

What did you learn about temptation from these verses that maybe you haven't seen before?

Why does temptation involve not just our actions but our hearts and motives?

What does it show you about God to know that He will never tempt you?

2. Read 1 Corinthians 10:12-13

God can be trusted not to allow temptations beyond what Christians can bear. God will always provide a way out of temptation so believers can stand up and not fall into apostasy. Furthermore, because of his great love for his children, God does not allow temptations to be so great that they overcome us. Instead, Christians sin because they do not search for a way out. Thus, God doesn't just give us an example of bad choices and the encouragement to make wise choices; He gives us the ability to do so. If we are in Christ, we never have to give in to temptation. God is faithful and always gives us a way out of temptation that doesn't include sinning against Him. We need to recognize the seriousness of our choices and stand with God in order to withstand temptation.

How have you seen this verse used out of context? Why is it important to understand the proper use of this context and how we view our relationship with God?

Why is knowing the Word of God essential to overcoming temptation?

Besides knowing God's Word, what are some other practical ways you can daily stand with God to withstand temptation?

3. Read Mark 14:38

Peter's assuredness that he would not enter into temptation was on Jesus' mind when He spoke these words in the garden (vv. 29-31). Jesus himself spent the night before His arrest on His knees in prayer. He understood the reality that "the flesh is weak," even in His own earthly life. He was watching—He knew His greatest trial and temptation was upon Him. He also knew the disciples greatest trial and temptation would soon follow. The

solution Jesus demonstrated and spoke over that reality was, “Watch and pray.” That night, the disciples failed to watch and pray, and they soon fell into temptation, deserting Jesus and denying knowing Him.

What do we need to acknowledge about ourselves as we encounter trials and temptations? What do we need to acknowledge about the enemy? God? How could this help you?

How does knowing that Jesus understands temptation and provides a way of escape encourage or challenge you?

What is something right now that you are facing as a trial that could lead to temptation if you aren’t careful? Maybe someone has hurt you and you want to “return the favor”? Maybe someone has said something hurtful and you want to gossip? What should ultimately be our response in these situations?