**How to Overcome Temptation**

***1 Corinthians 10:13 (We can…)***

* God does not want us to fail, so He would not give us anything we can’t handle.
* **When we succumb to temptation it is not because God has forsaken us, but we did not look for the escape.**

***James 1:12-15 (We must…)***

* **If we are to escape the clutches of death and secure eternal life (crown of life) overcoming temptation is a necessity.**
* The only alternative to overcoming to temptation is succumbing to it which is sin, and sin produces death.

1. Flee

* **1 Corinthians 6:18; 10:14**
  + If we linger we are bound to fall short.
  + The concept of fleeing is understood in the concept of holiness – **2 Corinthians 6:17-7:1**
    - **We should not ask how close to sin we can get, but how close to God are we able to be.**
* **2 Timothy 2:22**
  + Fleeing must be coupled with pursuing. This safeguards us from temptation.
  + **The only place we can flee to that is sure to guard us from sin are the righteous things of God.**

1. Count the Cost (Develop an eternal perspective)

* **2 Corinthians 4:16-18**
  + The apostles were able to endure great persecution because their mind was set on things above. – Things of the world are passing away – **1 John 2:17**
  + **When we succumb to temptation it is because we did not think about losing that which matters the most – our soul.**
* **Hebrews 11:24-26**
  + Moses was able to look beyond what was right in front of him.
  + **He understood the temptation to be for temporary things, and that pursuing it would be devastating in the end.**
    - ***“For the wages of sin is death”* (Romans 6:23).**
  + ***“Those who say such things (strangers and pilgrims on the earth) declare plainly that they seek a homeland”* (11:14)**.

1. Develop Good Desires

* **Philippians 4:8-9**
  + A carnal mind only sees value in carnal things. If we are truly transforming our minds (cf. Romans 12:2) then we will desire spiritual things.
  + **If our desire is truly for these things of high value we will not long for those which are opposite.**
* **Galatians 6:7-8 – seed principle**
  + **If we desire evil things, and therefore consume evil things, we will succumb to the temptation of such and be evil people.**
  + Our desires are products of our heart. – ***“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also”* (Matthew 6:21**).
    - ***“For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks”* (Matthew 12:34).**

1. Pray

* **Matthew 6:13; 26:41**
  + Prayer is unfortunately underestimated. It is a tool given to us by God to live acceptably in His sight.
  + ***“The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much”* (James 5:16).**
    - **Often, our falling short could have been prevented by vigilant prayer.**

1. Do Not Let Your Defenses Down

* **Romans 13:11-14**
  + Instead of being complacent, we should recognize the coming of the Lord as soon, and put on the armor of light in Christ to be ready for that day.
  + **We should not have occasions where we allow our guard to be let down.**
  + **We must not make provision!**
* **1 Corinthians 10:12**
  + The person standing in pride has foolishly let down his defenses.
  + **We must not think we are above falling short. For when we do, that is when we will fall.**
* **1 Peter 5:8-9**
  + The devil is an ever present threat. He does not slumber. Neither should we.
  + **We should always be serious about spiritual matters.**
  + **There are times when we can relax and have fun, but never without being on alert.**

**Conclusion**

1. Overcoming temptation is necessary and very possible.
2. It requires diligence and awareness. We must not trifle with the devil and his devices.
3. We must have the tools to overcome temptations.