

6 Times When You Will Face Temptations and Tests

I have been a committed Christ follower since 1978 and I have experienced many tests, trials and temptations.

The following are the seasons of six primary tests and temptations I have observed in my own Christian walk:

1. Tests come before a great assignment.

I found that right before God wants to do something great, either in an event or in my life and ministry, there was an extraordinary amount of resistance against me.

In the beginning of my Christian journey, this was at times confusing, but as I matured, I realized that if I did not get resistance from the enemy, then that was a sign that I was probably missing God. Hence, when there is great spiritual warfare, I have confidence that God is ready to do something big. This gives me the endurance and patience I need to continue on in spite of the intense difficulty I am experiencing.

2. Tests come right after a completed assignment.

Through the years, I also discovered that Satan attacks right after great achievements and victories because he is desperately attempting one last time to prevent our forward motion. Often after experiencing a major victory, we are not on guard and are vulnerable to attacks from the enemy.

This is similar to what happened after Elijah the prophet reached his peak in ministry after he called down fire from heaven and proved to the nation of Israel that Jehovah was the true God over Baal (1 Kin. 18).

Immediately afterward, the wicked Queen Jezebel threatened his

life, he got discouraged, wanted to end his life and ran into the wilderness (1 Kin. 19). Also, we read in the Gospels that after Jesus had a great glimpse of the glory of His Father on the Mount of Transfiguration, immediately after, demonic oppression manifested so strongly that even His disciples could not deal with it or cast it out (Matt. 17:1-20).

I learned the hard way that after every breakthrough or victory I experience, I have to be on high alert so I am not blindsided by an attack.

3. Tests come in between a prophetic word and its fulfillment.

Some of the greatest tests I experience happen while waiting for a prophetic word to be fulfilled. Often, the timing of a prophetic sense or word is not accurately discerned and people think a word will be fulfilled soon after they receive it. Sometimes I have had to wait years before words spoken to my heart by God were ever fulfilled. Some words spoken decades ago have still not come to pass. This is a great test of faith. Abraham experienced a similar test when God told him he would have a son, and he had to wait several decades before Isaac was born (Gen. 12-21).

Not only that, but after Isaac was born, God tested Abraham's obedience by telling him to sacrifice his son on the altar (Gen. 22). In light of this, after we receive a word from the Lord, we need to ponder it in our hearts like Mary did after the word about the birth of her son (Luke 2:19). We have to discern both the timing and interpretation of it and rest in the Lord until it comes to pass. We need to continue in well doing and not faint because in due season we will reap if we do not give up (Gal. 6:9). This is perhaps the hardest of all the tests in this article.

4. Temptation comes when you are at your weakest point.

In studying the Gospels, we learn that the devil came to tempt Jesus after He fasted 40 days and was hungry (Luke 4). After

Jesus resisted all the temptations successfully, the devil left Him until a more opportune time came (Luke 4:13). I have learned that the devil doesn't have mercy upon believers when they are weak, tired, discouraged, angry, bitter, offended, sick or burned out. Rather, that's when he assaults them the most. Never think that the devil feels sorry for you or will have mercy on you when you are struggling. This is why we have to have covenant relationships with mature Christians who will come around you when you are weak and help pray you through in your weakest moments.

Along these lines, I also learned never to make major decisions or communicate sensitive information to others when I am weary, tired, discouraged or angry since I am not in a good position emotionally to discern the will of God.

5. Temptation comes when you are bored.

Second Samuel 11 illustrates how King David fell into adultery and murder when he was idle and stayed home instead of going to battle like the other kings did. Often, because people do not have a strong sense of purpose and or get bored, they get involved in adulterous relationships because they yearn for excitement and stimulation. I have found that the only thing that saves me during the mundane times is my deep intimacy with the Lord. As long as my primary motivation for living comes from seeking and knowing God (and not from ministry), then when I experience mundane times, I can use the extra time I have to seek and study the ways of God (which further prepares me for the next big thing I will face when my schedule becomes hectic again).

6. Temptation comes when you lose your primary focus.

Along with the last point, temptation comes when you allow distractions to keep you away from the main things you are called to focus on in life.

Besides our walk with the Lord and our commitment to family

and church, we all have a primary assignment we should focus on. One of the greatest temptations I have faced in life is not necessarily sinful temptations, but many good opportunities that can wear me out and keep me from maximizing my time and focus on my primary assignments. The enemy of God's best is often disguised in the form of good opportunities. We have to continually focus so we can keep the main thing the priority in our lives.

Finally, I thank God that He always provides a way of escape from temptations (1 Cor. 10:13) and is always with me during my fiery trials and tests (Is. 43:2-3).