

Coping With Temptation

No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. **—1 Corinthians 10:13**

It is said of Jesus that He “was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil” (Matt. 4:1). It seems that, although the devil can do the direct tempting, it is the Spirit who may lead us into a place where the devil can do his work.

Or take the example of Job.

The Lord said to Satan, “Have you considered my servant Job?” (Job 1:8).

God earmarked Job for greater blessing. He already was greatly blessed, but God wanted to bless him more. You may think, Well, why didn’t God just go on and do it? I don’t know. For reasons I don’t understand, God tests us. He tested Job and tested him to the hilt. Maybe He’s doing that with you.

Now there are, in fact, two origins of temptation. One is the flesh; the other is the devil. Let’s remember, when it comes to the flesh, these words of James: “When tempted, no one should say, ‘God is tempting me’” (James 1:13). James said this because, when we are tempted, it often seems as if God is involved. Temptation comes so easily to us. It is so natural, so painless, that even the most mature people may think to themselves, God is actually in this, when in fact it is the flesh deceiving us every time.

What might help us to resist temptation? Three suggestions:

1. Remember that temptation is a test from God, and that any temptation is resistible. (See 1 Corinthians 10:13.)
2. Imagine how you’re going to feel if you don’t give in to

it, and how you're going to feel if you do.

3. Remember that God is looking for those He can trust.

Excerpted from *When God Shows Up* (Renew Books, 1998).