Temptation (Sin, Repentance) last edit August 12 2019

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**1. How does God define sin in the Bible?**

The Greek word for sin in the NT is “hamartia” which, as a noun, translates to “a missing of the mark.” As a verb it translates to “to miss the mark.” From “Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words” Vine, Unger, White; Thomas Nelson Publishers 1996

(glc) The “mark” is what God identifies as good. In the OT the law laid out what God’s standards were for behavior. No one, other than Jesus, kept the law. In the NT sin is described as being present in all of us. Our sin separates us from God. Our sin needs repentance (see passages on John the Baptist). Our state of sin is remedied by Jesus (Romans chapter 7).

“Any thought, word, desire, action, or omission of action, contrary to the law of God, or defective when compared with it.” from the ATS Bible Dictionary

Rom 14:23 (NET) “**23** But the man who doubts is condemned if he eats, because he does not do so from faith, and whatever is not from faith is sin.”

(glc) We need to act in line with our faith in God.

James 4:17 (NET) “**17** So whoever knows what is good to do and does not do it is guilty of sin.”

(glc) We can sin by not acting. We sin when we don’t take an action that we know God wants us to take.

1 John 3:4 (NET) “**4** Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; indeed, sin is lawlessness. “

(glc) Sin is going against God’s laws.

1 John 5:17 (NET) “**17** All unrighteousness is sin, but there is sin not resulting in death.”

(glc) Sin is unrighteousness. God sets the standard of righteousness.

Isaiah 59:2-4 (NET) “**2** But your sinful acts have alienated you from your God;

your sins have caused him to reject you and not listen to your prayers.

3 For your hands are stained with blood and your fingers with sin;

your lips speak lies, your tongue utters malicious words.

4 No one is concerned about justice; no one sets forth his case truthfully.

They depend on false words and tell lies; they conceive of oppression

and give birth to sin. “

(glc) This passage from Isaiah describes sin as murder, lieing, injustice, scheming to oppress. The consequence of sin described here is alienation from God.

(glc) There is not a comprehensive list of sins in the Bible. Instead, it is better to be guided by the principle that offending God is sin. This means that you should know what pleases and what offends God. God is pleased when we follow the model Jesus gave us in the NT.

**2. Is temptation sin?**

Mark 1:13 (NET) “**13** He was in the wilderness forty days, enduring temptations from Satan. He was with wild animals, and angels were ministering to his needs.”

Luke 4:1-13 (NET) “ Then Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan River and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, **2** where for forty days he endured temptations from the devil .….”

(glc) Jesus was tempted but did not do what Satan wanted him to do. Jesus refuted temptation from Satan by using scripture passages.

Hebrews 4:15 (NET) “For we do not have a high priest incapable of sympathizing with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in every way just as we are, yet without sin.”

(glc) Jesus was exposed to temptations but he did not sin.

No, we are not in a state of sin when we are first tempted.

**3. Does sin follow temptation?**

Sometimes….

2 Samuel 11:1-15 (NET) “... at the time when kings normally conduct wars, David sent out Joab with his officers and the entire Israelite army. .... But David stayed behind in Jerusalem. 2 One evening David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of his palace.From the roof he saw a woman bathing. Now this woman was very attractive. 3 So David sent someone to inquire about the woman. The messenger said, “Isn’t this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?”

4 David sent some messengers to get her. She came to him and he went to bed with her. ...Then she returned to her home. 5The woman conceived and then sent word to David saying, “I’m pregnant.” 6 So David sent a message to Joab that said, “Send me Uriah the Hittite.” ... 8Then David said to Uriah, “Go down to your home and relax.” ... 9 But Uriah stayed at the door of the palace with all the servants of his lord. He did not go down to his house. ...11 Uriah replied to David, “The ark and Israel and Judah reside in temporary shelters, and my lord Joab and my lord’s soldiers are camping in the open field. Should I go to my house to eat and drink and go to bed with my wife? As surely as you are alive, I will not do this thing!” … 14 In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it with Uriah. 15 In the letter he wrote: “Station Uriah at the front in the thick of the battle and then withdraw from him so he will be cut down and killed.”

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(glc) David saw Bathsheba and was tempted. He had her come to his palace and sinned. He compounded his sin by having Uriah killed in battle.

1 Samuel 12 describes how God confronts david for his sin and how this sin brought dire consequences into David’s life. This sin, and others, also impacted the nation of Israel. Read how David repented in 1 Samuel 12 and Psalm 51.

James 1:15 (NET) “**15**Then when desire conceives, it gives birth to sin, and when sin is full grown, it gives birth to death.”

(glc) Our desires are not naturally aligned with God’s desires and lead us to sin, to disobey God.

Matthew 5:27,28 (NET) “**27** “You have heard that it was said, ‘***Do not commit adultery***.’ **28** But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to desire her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”

(glc) Our thought life can be sinful. Initial thoughts that come in to our mind are not sinful unless we let them linger in our mind. The world we live in is a fallen world full of sin, with many kinds of temptations. We need to take charge of our mind and take responsibility for the thoughts we allow to linger in our minds.

**4. Sin does not have to follow temptation.**

Romans 12:2 (NET) “**2** Do not be conformed to this present world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may test and approve what is the will of God – what is good and well-pleasing and perfect.

(glc) take thoughts captive, renew your mind

1 Corinthians 10:3-5 (NET) “ **3** For though we live as human beings, we do not wage war according to human standards, **4** for the weapons of our warfare are not human weapons, but are made powerful by God for tearing down strongholds. We tear down arguments **5** and every arrogant obstacle that is raised up against the knowledge of God, and we take every thought captive to make it obey Christ.”

Philippians 4:8,9 (NET) “**8** Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is worthy of respect, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if something is excellent or praiseworthy, think about these things. **9** And what you learned and received and heard and saw in me, do these things. And the God of peace will be with you.”

(glc) fill your mind with good things

Colossians 3:1 - 10 (NET) “Therefore, if you have been raised with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. **2** Keep thinking about things above, not things on the earth, **3** for you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. **4** When Christ (who is your life) appears, then you too will be revealed in glory with him. **5** So put to death whatever in your nature belongs to the earth: sexual immorality, impurity, shameful passion, evil desire, and greed which is idolatry. **6** Because of these things the wrath of God is coming on the sons of disobedience. **7** You also lived your lives in this way at one time, when you used to live among them. **8** But now, put off all such things as anger, rage, malice, slander, abusive language from your mouth. **9** Do not lie to one another since you have put off the old man with its practices **10** and have been clothed with the new man that is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of the one who created it.”

(glc) Live as God wants you to live.

1 Peter 4:1-6 (NET) “ So, since Christ suffered in the flesh, you also arm yourselves with the same attitude, because the one who has suffered in the flesh has finished with sin, **2** in that he spends the rest of his time on earth concerned about the will of God and not human desires. **3** For the time that has passed was sufficient for you to do what the non-Christians desire. You lived then in debauchery, evil desires, drunkenness, carousing, drinking bouts, and wanton idolatries. **4** So they are astonished when you do not rush with them into the same flood of wickedness, and they vilify you. **5** They will face a reckoning before Jesus Christ who stands ready to judge the living and the dead. **6** Now it was for this very purpose that the gospel was preached to those who are now dead, so that though they were judged in the flesh by human standards they may live spiritually by God’s standards.”

(glc) Focus on God’s goals, not on your desires. Don’t go back to a life of sin after you accept Jesus as your savior. There will be judgment in heaven.

1 Chronicles 28:9 (NET) “**9** “And you, Solomon my son, obey the God of your father and serve him with a submissive attitude and a willing spirit, for the Lord examines all minds and understands every motive of one’s thoughts. If you seek him, he will let you find him, but if you abandon him, he will reject you permanently. “

(glc) Keep your attitude one of submission to God and seeking to do and think in line with God’s ways. Temporary, quick, thoughts are not sin. God knows our motives and mind.

Psalm 119:9-11 (NET) “How can a young person maintain a pure life?

By guarding it according to your instructions! 10 With all my heart I seek you.

Do not allow me to stray from your commands! 11 In my heart I store up your words,

so I might not sin against you.“

(glc) keep your way pure by storing up God’s word in you

Matthew 23:23-28 (NET) “23 “Woe to you, experts in the law and you Pharisees, hypocrites! You give a tenth of mint, dill, and cumin,yet you neglect what is more important in the law – justice, mercy, and faithfulness! You should have done these things without neglecting the others. 24 Blind guides! You strain out a gnat yet swallow a camel!

25 “Woe to you, experts in the law and you Pharisees, hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and the dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. 26 Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup,so that the outside may become clean too!

27 “Woe to you, experts in the law and you Pharisees, hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs that look beautiful on the outside but inside are full of the bones of the dead and of everything unclean. 28 In the same way, on the outside you look righteous to people, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.”

(glc) The inside of your life, your thoughts, your attitudes, are more important than outward appearances. We can put on an outward show for people but God knows our heart.

Job 31:1 (NET) “ “I made a covenant with my eyes; how then could I entertain thoughts against a virgin?“

(glc) Plan ahead. Make the decision now to look away and not let lustful thoughts grow in your mind when you happen to catch sight of someone who would cause you temptation. We can’t avoid all of these visual situations but we can be prepared to not stare, to not look at the person multiple times.

Proverbs 5:3-8 (NET) 3 For the lips of the adulterous woman drip honey, and her seductive words are smoother than olive oil, 4 but in the end she is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. 5 Her feet go down to death; her steps lead straight to the grave. 6 Lest she should make level the path leading to life, her paths have wandered, but she is not able to discern it. 7 So now, children, listen to me; do not turn aside from the words I speak.

8 Keep yourself far from her, and do not go near the door of her house,”

(glc) The last verse is really good advice. Don’t put yourself near situations where there will be temptation. You should not go out of your way to find tempting situations.

Proverbs 7:4-9 (NET) “4 Say to wisdom, “You are my sister,” and call understanding a close relative, 5 so that they may keep you from the adulterous woman, from the loose woman who has flattered you with her words. 6 For at the window of my house through my window lattice I looked out 7 and I saw among the naive – I discerned among the youths – a young man who lacked sense. 8 He was passing by the street near her corner, making his way along the road to her house 9 in the twilight, the evening,

in the dark of the night.

(glc) Keep God’s wisdom close to you and let this wisdom give you discernment and the conviction to make good decisions. Don’t think that because a person gives you permission to look at them or to entertain thoughts of what pleasure might be ahead, that you have the right to follow through. You are responsible for your own actions. If someone tries to lead you into wrong actions and thoughts it is your responsibility to control your thoughts and control your actions and to say no to any thought of continuing in the situation or going further in the situation. Don’t be naive. You are not as strong as you might think you are. Don’t get near tempting situations just to see what they are like. Don’t say to yourself that you are just getting knowledge about these situations to understand them better. Repeated exposure to those situations can wear down your defenses and lead you to make bad decisions. And lastly, notice the time of day, evening, getting dark. Don’t think that the things you try to do secretly will stay secret. There is no darkness to God’s eyes and even other people can see you delving into temptations when you think you are acting in secret.

Romans 6:12-14 (NET) “**12** Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its desires, **13** and do not present your members to sin as instruments to be used for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who are alive from the dead and your members to God as instruments to be used for righteousness. **14** For sin will have no mastery over you, because you are not under law but under grace.”

(glc) Don’t give sin influence in your body. If we dwell on the temptation and let it develop into actions we have sinned. Fill your life with the desire to please God. We have power over sin through Jesus sacrifice for us and his victory over sin on the cross.

1 Corinthians 10:12,13 (NET) “**12** So let the one who thinks he is standing be careful that he does not fall. **13** No trial has overtaken you that is not faced by others. And God is faithful: He will not let you be tried beyond what you are able to bear, but with the trial will also provide a way out so that you may be able to endure it.”

Genesis 39:1-15 (glc) Potiphar’s wife tries to seduce Joseph. Joseph fled. Move away from tempting situations.

1 Corinthians 6:18,19 (NET) “ **18** Flee sexual immorality! “Every sin a person commits is outside of the body” – but the immoral person sins against his own body. **19** Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? **20** For you were bought at a price. Therefore glorify God with your body.”

(glc) Christians can flee from sexual immorality.

2 Timothy 2:20-26 (NET) “**20** Now in a wealthy home there are not only gold and silver vessels, but also ones made of wood and of clay, and some are for honorable use, but others for ignoble use. **21** So if someone cleanses himself of such behavior, he will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart, useful for the Master, prepared for every good work. **22** But keep away from youthful passions, and pursue righteousness, faithfulness, love, and peace, in company with others who call on the Lord from a pure heart. **23** But reject foolish and ignorant controversies, because you know they breed infighting. **24** ... **25** correcting opponents with gentleness. Perhaps God will grant them repentance and then knowledge of the truth **26** and they will come to their senses and escape the devil’s trap where they are held captive to do his will.”

(glc) Put the search for righteousness, faithfulness, love, and peace in your life to shield you from following through on temptations. “Youthful passions” speaks to a time when one is less self-controlled and less disciplined.

**5. Who tempts us?**
Genesis 3:1 – 10 The serpent (representing Satan, see Revelation 12:9; 20:2) tempts (leads) Eve to doubt God and to disobey.

1 Chronicles 21:1-7 A challenging situation led David to number the army instead of just trusting God.

Proverbs 1:10-17 (NET) “10 My child, if sinners try to entice you,

do not consent! 11 If they say, “Come with us! We will lie in wait to shed blood;

we will ambush an innocent person capriciously. 12 We will swallow them alive like Sheol, those full of vigor like those going down to the Pit. 13 We will seize all kinds of precious wealth; we will fill our houses with plunder. 14 Join with us! We will all share equally in what we steal.” 15 My child, do not go down their way, withhold yourself from their path; 16 for they are eager to inflict harm, and they hasten to shed blood.

17 Surely it is futile to spread a net in plain sight of any bird, 18 but these men lie in wait for their own blood, they ambush their own lives! “

(glc) Don’t let peer pressure lead your life. Make your own decisions (verse 15).

Proverbs 4:11-15 (NET) “11 I hereby guide you in the way of wisdom and I lead you in upright paths. 12 When you walk, your steps will not be hampered, and when you run, you will not stumble. 13 Hold on to instruction, do not let it go; protect it, because it is your life. 14 Do not enter the path of the wicked or walk in the way of those who are evil. 15 Avoid it, do not go on it; turn away from it, and go on. “

(glc) Listen and take to heart good instruction from the Bible. Don’t follow those who have actions contrary to the ways of God. Don’t tag along with those who have bad intentions. Use discernment. Those who are seeking their own self interests are not going to have your best interest at heart.

Matthew 4:1 (NET) “Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.”

(glc) This strikes me as having similarities to God allowing Satan to afflict Job (read Job chapter 1 and more). Job was tempted to curse God and die by his wife (Job 2:9) after these afflictions. Jesus was put into a place of stress (the wilderness). God knew Satan would tempt Jesus. As you read through the book of Job you will find that Job did speak out of turn at the end. He was not perfect. Jesus was perfect and fully resisted the temptation to sin.

1 Peter 5:8-11 (NET) “**8** Be sober and alert. Your enemy the devil, *like a roaring lion,* is on the prowl looking for someone to devour. **9** Resist him, strong in your faith, because you know that your brothers and sisters throughout the world are enduring the same kinds of suffering. **10** And, after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace who called you to his eternal glory in Christ will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. **11** To him belongs the power forever. Amen.”

(glc) As Christians, we have power to resist the devil through our faith in Jesus. God will make all things right. for some Christians this will happen on Earth. For others it will happen in heaven. God is in charge of these decisions on the timing to make things right. (Read Jeremiah 18:1-12, Isaiah 64:1-8; Romans 9:14-24)

2 Corinthians 2:8-11 (NET) “ **8** Therefore I urge you to reaffirm your love for him. **9** For this reason also I wrote you: to test you to see if you are obedient in everything. **10** If you forgive anyone for anything, I also forgive him – for indeed what I have forgiven (if I have forgiven anything) I did so for you in the presence of Christ, **11** so that we may not be exploited by Satan (for we are not ignorant of his schemes). “

(glc) Satan schemes against us. Be on your guard and have discernment in your situations.

1 John 2:15-17 (NET) “**15** Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him, **16** because all that is in the world (the desire of the flesh and the desire of the eyes and the arrogance produced by material possessions) is not from the Father, but is from the world. **17** And the world is passing away with all its desires, but the person who does the will of God remains forever.”

(glc) What is in the world can lead us astray.

Acts 5:1-4 (NET) “Now a man named Ananias, together with Sapphira his wife, sold a piece of property. **2** He kept back for himself part of the proceeds with his wife’s knowledge; he brought only part of it and placed it at the apostles’ feet. **3** But Peter said, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back for yourself part of the proceeds from the sale of the land? **4** Before it was sold, did it not belong to you? And when it was sold, was the money not at your disposal? How have you thought up this deed in your heart?You have not lied to people but to God!” “

(glc) Ananias and Sapphira gave in to Satan’s suggestion to claim they were making a big donation by giving all of the money they received for selling land.

Luke 22:3,4 (NET) “**3** Then Satan entered Judas, the one called Iscariot, who was one of the twelve. **4** He went away and discussed with the chief priests and officers of the temple guard how he might betray Jesus, handing him over to them.”

John 13:1-2 (NET) “ Just before the Passover Feast, Jesus knew that his time had come to depart from this world to theFather. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now loved them to the very end. **2** The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, that he should betray Jesus.”

(glc) Judas gave in to Satan’s leading to betray Jesus. (Note: Christians cannot be possessed by Satan, we are possessed by God. See 2 Corinthians 6:14,15; Colossians 1:13; 1 John 2:13; 1John 4:4; 1 Peter 1:5; 1John 5:18. There are no cases in the NT where Christians have demons cast out of them.

But Christians can open their ears and minds to the leadings of Satan and sin.)

**6. Who does not tempt us?**James 1:13-15 (NET) “**13** Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am tempted by God,” for God cannot be tempted by evil,and he himself tempts no one. **14** But each one is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desires. **15**Then when desire conceives, it gives birth to sin, and when sin is full grown, it gives birth to death.”

(glc) God tests us but God does not tempt us. We are responsible for letting desire rule our lives and lead us into sin.

**7. Has anyone been tempted the way you are tempted?**

Hebrews 4:15,16 (NET) “**15** For we do not have a high priest incapable of sympathizing with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in every way just as we are, yet without sin. **16** Therefore let us confidently approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and find grace whenever we need help.”

(glc) Jesus was tempted and did not sin. We can come to Jesus in prayer when we are tempted and we will find help. We should also read the Bible before temptation comes and after temptation comes to find direction and help.

**8. When are we more open to temptation?**
Deuteronomy 8:11-20 (NET) “**11** Be sure you do not forget the Lord your God by not keeping his commandments, ordinances, and statutes that I am giving you today. **12** When you eat your fill, when you build and occupy good houses, **13** when your cattle and flocks increase, when you have plenty of silver and gold, and when you have abundance of everything, **14** be sure you do not feel self-important and forget the Lord your God who brought you from the land of Egypt... **15** and who brought you through the great, fearful wilderness .... **17** Be careful not to say, “My own ability and skill have gotten me this wealth.” **18** You must remember the Lord your God, for he is the one who gives ability to get wealth; if you do this he will confirm his covenant that he made by oath to your ancestors, even as he has to this day. **19** Now if you forget the Lord your God at all and follow other gods, worshiping and prostrating yourselves before them, I testify to you today that you will surely be annihilated. **20** ... he will do to you because you would not obey him.

(glc) When we drift away from God and think we stand on our own we separate us from God’s power and protection, and even incur his wrath if we worship false gods. We are in danger of acting on temptations when we don’t have a strong connection and relation to God.

Matthew Chapter 4: 1 – 3a (NET) “ Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. **2** After he fasted forty days and forty nights he was famished. **3** The tempter came and said to him…”

(glc) When we are physically tired and stress we need to be on our guard against temptations.

**9. How do we resist moving from temptation to sin?**
How did Jesus resist temptation?
Matthew Chapter 4: 1 – 11 (NET) “ Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil….. **4** But he (Jesus) answered, “It is written, ‘***Man*** ***does not live*** ***by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God***.’” **5** …(Satan tried to use scripture to tempt Jesus) **7** Jesus said to him, “Once again it is written: ‘***You are not to put the Lord your God to the test***.’” **8** …. worship me.” **10** Then Jesus said to him, “Go away, Satan! For it is written: ‘***You are to worship the Lord your God and serve*** only ***him***.’” **11** Then the devil left him,.....”

(glc) Jesus knew scripture and let scripture guide him to not act on temptations. Scripture is stronger than our rationalizations, stronger than our reasonings, stronger than our arguments.

Psalm 119:11 (NET) “11 In my heart I store up your words, so I might not sin against you. “

(glc) Knowing, and believing, scripture will help you not act on temptations.

Proverbs 2:10-16 (NET) “11 Discretion will protect you, understanding will guard you,

12 to deliver you from the way of the wicked, from those speaking perversity,

13 who leave the upright paths to walk on the dark ways,

14 who delight in doing evil, they rejoice in perverse evil;

15 whose paths are morally crooked, and who are devious in their ways;

16 to deliver you from the adulterous woman, from the loose woman who has flattered you with her words; “

(glc) Build up your capabilities of discretion. This involves developing your self-control and being willing to deny yourself some things that would otherwise come into your life. e.g. Deny yourself luxuries, deny yourself the total control of your free time.

Proverbs 4:14,15 (NET) “14 Do not enter the path of the wicked or walk in the way of those who are evil. 15 Avoid it, do not go on it; turn away from it, and go on. “

(glc) Don’t follow the example or the guidance of those who are evil. Look at their character, not at the surface glitter they have. Don’t linger with them. Don’t let your mind linger on the apparent comforts in their lives.

Isaiah 33:15-16 (NET) “15 The one who lives uprightly and speaks honestly;

the one who refuses to profit from oppressive measures and rejects a bribe;

the one who does not plot violent crimes and does not seek to harm others –

16 This is the person who will live in a secure place; he will find safety in the rocky, mountain strongholds; he will have food and a constant supply of water. “

(glc) Form good habits in your life before temptation comes. Have a pattern of righteous living and honest behavior. Don’t think about doing harm to others; think about doing good to others.

Matthew 26:41 (NET) “**41** Stay awake and pray that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.” “

(glc) Ask God for help in resisting temptation. Recognize that our bodies naturally drift towards sin.

Romans 6:12-14 (NET) “**12** Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its desires, **13** and do not present your members to sin as instruments to be used for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who are alive from the dead and your members to God as instruments to be used for righteousness. **14** For sin will have no mastery over you, because you are not under law but under grace.”

(glc) Recognize that you have hope, you have power, to make a decision to not act on temptations. It is your choice to live as God wants you to live. Jesus defeated sin by his sacrifice for you on the cross. Focus on God and what he wants and you won’t as easily see the temptations.

1 Peter 5:8,9 (NET) “ **8** Be sober and alert. Your enemy the devil, *like a roaring lion,* is on the prowl looking for someone to devour. **9** Resist him, strong in your faith, because you know that your brothers and sisters throughout the world are enduring the same kinds of suffering.”

(glc) Be aware that temptations are around you. Be aware that Satan is your enemy and wants to afflict your life. Through faith in Jesus you can resist and overcome Satan. This is not to say that we should go out looking to pick a fight with Satan. But we should know we can stand against his attacks.

Eph 6:10-17 (NET) “10 ... be strengthened in the Lord and in the strength of his power. 11 Clothe yourselves with the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. 12 For our struggle is ... against the rulers, against the powers, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavens. 13 For this reason, take up the full armor of God so that you may be able to stand your ground on the evil day, and having done everything, to stand. 14 Stand firm therefore, by fastening the belt of truth around your waist, by putting on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 by fitting your feet with the preparation that comes from the good news of peace, 16 and in all of this, by taking up the shield of faith with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. 17 And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit (which is the word of God).”

(glc) We have protection from God that we need to make use of. This protection will let us stand and not be brought down by the devil’s schemes. The truth of God’s word and promises can be relied on to calm our minds and guide our steps. Make righteousness a character of your life that is visible and effective in guiding your decisions and actions. Prepare yourself with the good news of the gospel. Make the good news of Jesus’ sacrifice for your sins your foundation that you stand on; that you rely on. Your strong and sure faith in God will help you think rightly when the devil attacks you. Your faith will help you make those attacks of no eternal effect. Protect your mind with your assurance of salvation. The devil cannot take away your salvation. Attack the attacks of the devil by using Bible passages. This was the approach Jesus used when he was tempted by Satan in the wilderness.

**10. We should resist temptation but what should we do if we sin?**

Genesis 3:7-10 (NET) “7 Then the eyes of both of them opened, and they knew they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. 8 Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God moving about in the orchard at the breezy time of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the orchard. 9 But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?” 10 The man replied, “I heard you moving about in the orchard, and I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid.” “

(glc) We tend to try to hide our sin, but we cannot hide from the God of the universe.

Psalm 32:1-11 (NET) “How blessed is the one whose rebellious acts are forgiven, whose sin is pardoned! 2 How blessed is the one whose wrongdoing the Lord does not punish, in whose spirit there is no deceit. 3 When I refused to confess my sin, my whole body wasted away.... 4 For day and night you tormented me; ...5 Then I confessed my sin;

I no longer covered up my wrongdoing. I said, “I will confess my rebellious acts to the Lord.” And then you forgave my sins. ...6 For this reason every one of your faithful followers should pray to you while there is a window of opportunity. .... 7 You are my hiding place; you protect me from distress. You surround me with shouts of joy from those celebrating deliverance. ...8 I will instruct and teach you about how you should live. .... 9 Do not be like an unintelligent horse or mule, which will not obey you unless they are controlled by a bridle and bit. 10 An evil person suffers much pain, but the Lord’s faithfulness overwhelms the one who trusts in him. 11 Rejoice in the Lord and be happy, you who are godly! Shout for joy, all you who are morally upright! “

(glc) God’s forgiveness is a blessing that we have access to because of Jesus’ sacrifice for our sins on the cross. We cannot successfully cover up our sin on our own. Unconfessed sin will affect your thought life and will affect your physical body. Are you sleeping peacefully? Are you free from worry during the day? Don’t try to deceive God, confess. God will forgive you because of Jesus’ sacrifice. He paid the price for our sins. (But don’t get complacent with this or take advantage of this. Read Romans 6.)

The time of opportunity to confess to God is now. After we die we all face judgment by God in heaven. Those who are Christians will still live with God forever even if there is unconfessed sin in their lives, but they will miss out on some rewards in heaven.

(This topic of rewards is too large for a full discussion here. Read Matthew 6:1-6 and 16-20; Matthew 16:27; Matthew 25:14-30; Romans 2:5-6; 1 Corinthians 3:11-15; Proverbs 24:12; 2 John 4-10; 2 Corinthians 5:10)

Deliverance from sin is a reason to have joy in your life. Be guided by your trust in God to act rightly. God can make your life difficult in an attempt to turn you from sin. Go along with God. He knows what is best for your life. Sin is not the best for your life. I think you can recognize that your are morally upright by comparing your life to what you read in the Bible: the descriptions of how God wants you to think and what God wants you to do. This recognition will cause you to have joy in your life.

Isaiah 55:6-7 (NET) “6 Seek the Lord while he makes himself available;

call to him while he is nearby! 7 The wicked need to abandon their lifestyle

and sinful people their plans. They should return to the Lord, and he will show mercy to them, and to their God, for he will freely forgive them. “

(glc) God is always present for you to turn to in repentance. God wants you to recognize that his ways are correct. Then he will forgive and show mercy.

Hebrews 4:12,13 (NET) “**12**For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any double-edged sword, piercing even to the point of dividing soul from spirit, and joints from marrow; it is able to judge the desires and thoughts of the heart. **13** And no creature is hidden from God, but everything is naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must render an account.”

(glc) We deceive ourselves if we think we can hide our sins from God.

1 John 1:6-10 (NET) “ **6** If we say we have fellowship with him and yet keep on walking in the darkness, we are lying and not practicing the truth. **7** But if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. **8** If we say we do not bear the guilt of sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. **9** But if we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous, forgiving us our sins and cleansing us from all unrighteousness. **10** If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar and his word is not in us.

**1 John 2:1-2** (My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. ) But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous One, **2** and he himself is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for our sins but also for the whole world.“

(glc) There should not be a difference between claiming to follow God and our actions. We have no authority to say that we are good and don’t have sin in our lives (verse 8). When we judge our lives correctly and confess our sins we receive forgiveness and unrighteousness is purified from our lives. This is not to say unrighteousness won’t come back. In fact, it is likely that sin will reenter our lives because our choices tend to be selfish. We should not take the attitude of accepting that sin will come back into our lives. We should fight against sin and seek to more closely follow God’s ways. Sin has consequences that can continue to affect our lives even though the sin is forgiven. By striving to avoid sin you will have fewer of these negative consequences in your life. (verse 10) We tend to rationalize sin in our lives and say our actions are OK. God and his word judge our motives and actions correctly. The passage continues into chapter 2 with the gospel. Jesus paid the price for our sin and now is our advocate with God the Father. Jesus’ sacrifice is the payment for our sin. Jesus’ sacrifice and atonement was for all the people on Earth. All can put their faith in Jesus and have a right relationship to God.

1 John 3:1-10 (NET) “ (See what sort of love the Father has given to us: that we should be called God’s children – and indeed we are!.... **2** Dear friends, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet been revealed. We know that whenever it is revealed we will be like him, because we will see him just as he is. 3 And everyone who has this hope focused on him purifies himself, just as Jesus is pure).

4 Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; indeed, sin is lawlessness. 5 And you know that Jesuswas revealed to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. 6 Everyone who resides in him does not sin;everyone who sins has neither seen him nor known him. 7 Little children, let no one deceive you: The one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as Jesus is righteous. 8 The one who practices sin is of the devil,because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was revealed: to destroy the works of the devil. 9 Everyone who has been fathered by God does not practice sin, because God’s seed resides in him, and thus he is not able to sin, because he has been fathered by God. 10 By this the children of God and the children of the devil are revealed: Everyone who does not practice righteousness – the one who does not love his fellow Christian – is not of God. “

(glc) As a child of God (a believer in Jesus) we have a confident hope in God and we should purify ourselves (repent). Sinning is being against God’s laws, God’s desire for our behavior. I view verses 6-10 as stating that true Christians do not make a practice of sinning; do not desire to continue to sin; do seek righteousness through Jesus’ sacrifice.

**11. Does the Bible give us any promises of victory in this area?**

Psalm 1:1-3 (NET) “How blessed is the one who does not follow the advice of the wicked, or stand in the pathway with sinners, or sit in the assembly of scoffers!

2 Instead he finds pleasure in obeying the Lord’s commands; he meditates on his commands day and night. 3 He is like a tree planted by flowing streams; it yields its fruit at the proper time, and its leaves never fall off. He succeeds in everything he attempts.

(glc) Put yourself in the company of solid Christians and read the Bible. This will lead to having a life blessed by God. Picture yourself as a fruitful tree that blesses others. Picture yourself as successful.

Psalm 119:11

(glc) Hide God’s word in your heart to protect you from giving in to temptation.

1 Corinthians 10:13 God provides a way of escape

2 Corinthians 2:10,11 (NET) “**10** If you forgive anyone for anything, I also forgive him – for indeed what I have forgiven (if I have forgiven anything) I did so for you in the presence of Christ, **11** so that we may not be exploited by Satan (for we are not ignorant of his schemes). “

(glc) We have been warned by God about temptations. They should not take us completely by surprise.

James 1:12 (NET) “**12** Happy is the one who endures testing, because when he has proven to be genuine, he will receive the crown of life that God promised to those who love him.”

(glc) Keep the faith! Your testing will not last forever. Read the book of Job. He was tested but was blessed by God later. Now, your testing may last until you die. But if you die as a Christian you will enter into God’s presence in heaven where all of our trials on Earth will be seen to be insignificant. (Read Romans 8)

Romans 8:16-25 (NET) “ 16 The Spirit himself bears witness to our spirit that we are God’s children. 17 And if children, then heirs (namely, heirs of God and also fellow heirs with Christ) – if indeed we suffer with him so we may also be glorified with him.

18 For I consider that our present sufferings cannot even be compared to the coming glory that will be revealed to us. 19 For the creation eagerly waits for the revelation of the sons of God. 20 For the creation was subjected to futility – not willingly but because of God who subjected it – in hope 21 that the creation itself will also be set free from the bondage of decay into the glorious freedom of God’s children. 22 For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers together until now. 23 Not only this, but we ourselves also, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we eagerly await our adoption, the redemption of our bodies. 24 For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope, because who hopes for what he sees? 25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with endurance. “

(glc) (verse 18) Our sufferings and trials on Earth pale in comparison to the glory of heaven. At death our bodies will be transformed. We should keep this certain hope in us and let it comfort us during our trials and testing on Earth.

Matthew 6:9-14 (NET) “9 So pray this way:

Our Father in heaven, may your name be honored, 10 may your kingdom come,

may your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. 11 Give us today our daily bread,

12 and forgive us our debts, as we ourselves have forgiven our debtors.

13 And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

14 “For if you forgive others their sins, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive others, your Father will not forgive you your sins. “

(glc) I take this to be a pattern for prayer although it is OK to read this prayer. But prayer should be from the heart, not from memory. Verse 13 is a request that God help us stay away from temptations. We can rely on God’s power to deliver us from the devil but we need to do our part in making good decisions as we face temptations.

Luke 22:39-46 (NET) “**39** Then Jesus went out and made his way, as he customarily did, to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed him. **40** When he came to the place, he said to them, “Pray that you will not fall into temptation.” **41**He went away from them about a stone’s throw, knelt down, and prayed, **42** “Father, if you are willing, take this cup away from me. Yet not my will but yours be done.” [ **43** Then an angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. **44** And in his anguish he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.] **45** When he got up from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping, exhausted from grief. **46** So he said to them, “Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you will not fall into temptation!” “

(glc) Pray that you won’t enter temptation. We need to be aware of temptations and need to be ready to make decisions that keep us from falling into temptations.

Ephesians 4:11-16 (NET) “**11** And he himself gave some as apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, **12** to equip the saints for the work of ministry, that is, to build up the body of Christ, **13** until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God—a mature person, attaining to the measure of Christ’s full stature. **14** So we are no longer to be children, tossed back and forth by waves and carried about by every wind of teaching by the trickery of people who craftily carry out their deceitful schemes. **15** But practicing the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into Christ, who is the head. **16** From him the whole body grows, fitted and held together through every supporting ligament. As each one does its part, the body builds itself up in love.”

(glc) We should listen to our spiritual leaders and grow in our faith. These leaders are responsible to God (James 3:1) and most fulfill their responsibilities. A good leader can be recognized by their adherence to the Bible and by actions that match what they teach. Our responsibility is to mature in our faith, to exercise our faith that it may develop. And as our faith matures we should be able to recognize the trickery of people who would bring temptation into our lives. When we can recognize temptation we can be on our guard and be more likely to avoid sin. I should also say that the building up of the body does not just come from the spiritual leaders (pastors, evangelists, etc.). Each person in the body of Christ (the church) should be having a positive influence on Christians they know to build them up in their faith.

Romans 4:13 (NET) “**13** For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would inherit the world was not fulfilled through the law, but through the righteousness that comes by faith.”

(glc) Right actions (avoiding sins) take place when you practice your Christian faith.

Romans 12:1,2 (NET) “Therefore I exhort you, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a sacrifice—alive, holy, and pleasing to God—which is your reasonable service. **2** Do not be conformed to this present world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may test and approve what is the will of God—what is good and well-pleasing and perfect.”

(glc) When we are a living sacrifice we put aside our selfish desires and turn away from temptations. When we renew our minds we direct our lives on the basis of God’s moral values rather than on the values of the world. Our world is a fallen world that does not naturally seek to do what is right. With a renewed mind we can see what God would want us to do and we can discern and understand situations of temptation.

Hebrews 4:14-16 (NET) “14 Therefore since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession. 15 For we do not have a high priest incapable of sympathizing with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in every way just as we are, yet without sin. 16 Therefore let us confidently approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and find grace whenever we need help.”

(glc) Keep your faith in Jesus strong. Jesus was tempted on Earth (but did not sin) and he understands our weaknesses. This does not mean that we are allowed to freely sin because we are weak! When we are tempted we can pray to Jesus asking for help for our weakness that we might not sin. But if we unfortunately do sin we can pray for forgiveness.

Ecclesiastes 4:12 (NET) “12 Although an assailant may overpower one person,

two can withstand him. Moreover, a three-stranded cord is not quickly broken.”

Hebrews 10:24,25 (NET) “ **24** And let us take thought of how to spur one another on to love and goodworks, **25** not abandoning our own meetings, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging each other, and even more so because you see the day drawing near.”

1 Thessalonians 5:9-11 (NET) “ **9** For God did not destine us for wrath but for gaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. **10** He died for us so that whether we are alert or asleep we will come to life together with him. **11** Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, just as you are in fact doing.”

(glc) Seek support from other Christians as you face temptations. Be accountable to someone and be honest with them.

Romans 14:11-12 (NET) “11 For it is written, “As I live, says the Lord, every knee will bow to me, and every tongue will give praise to God.” 12 Therefore, each of us will give an account of himself to God.”

(glc) Our ultimate accountability is to God.

I have not researched the statements of faith for these resources but at first glance the content seems OK

<https://www.allaboutgod.com/christian-accountability.htm>

<https://erlc.com/resource-library/articles/accountability-in-community-is-crucial-to-christian-living>

Remind yourself that sin has consequences

**12. Miscellaneous**

1 Peter 4:7-11 (NET) “**7** For the culmination of all things is near. So be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of prayer. **8**Above all keep your love for one another fervent, because ***love covers a multitude of sins***. **9** Show hospitality to one another without complaining. **10** Just as each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of the varied grace of God. **11** Whoever speaks, let it be with God’s words. Whoever serves, do so with the strength that God supplies, so that in everything God will be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.”

(glc) Think about how you should react to sins done to you.