

# Back to Basics: 9. How to Overcome Temptation & Sin

## **Genesis 3:1-7**

*Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'" The serpent said to the woman. "You will not surely die, for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.*

We are in a bad way. We live in a cursed and fallen world that is experiencing death and decay. We live in bodies that are experiencing that same condemnation. We live in bodies and minds that are also fallen creatures experience consequence of Adam and Eve's sin in our every day experience. We have three things working against us in this fallen world, 1) Satan 2) Sin 3) Self.

Every one of these is like a huge magnet, or a gravitational force, that is pulling us downward every moment of every day. We can't escape the pull of sin any more than we can escape earth's gravity. Sin is all around us, and it is in us. John describes it as "the world, the flesh, and the devil." (1 John 2:15-16)

## **What Is Temptation?**

*Temptation is the urge to be like God, to do things your own way, to be the king of your life, the ruler of your own universe, and the master of your own soul. It is the propensity to yield to your own inclinations, desires, pleasures, urges, and natural ways rather than God's ways. It is the impulse to do things your way. John called it 1) the desires of the flesh (physical cravings), 2) the desires of the eye (covetousness), 3) and the pride of life (ego, self-lordship). It's the pull of the old nature in you.*

## **What Is Sin?**

*Sin is not necessarily outright rebellion against God. It is first the decision to disbelieve God, then to do things your own way. Sin is giving in to the WORLD, the FLESH, and/or the DEVIL. It is allowing something, or someone, else to be the controlling LORD of your life. Sin is first and foremost the surrender of the Lordship of Christ to some other Lord.*

## **What or who is the Devil?**

*The devil is the outside aggravating force that influences you by launching ideas, suggestions, and enflaming desires that already reside within you. He is a fallen angel who works against us with a myriad of fallen angels to whisper suggestions, and places temptations in front of us, with the purpose of getting us to yield to the sin of Adam and Eve, that is, to doubt God's good intentions for us, and become our own masters.*

**It is only through the indwelling Lord Jesus that we can ever hope to resist the forces out to get us. Jesus gives us the victory as we decide to yield to him instead of our impulses.**