



God uses three instruments to bring lasting transformation in our lives: *truth*, *trouble*, and *temptation*. We have looked at the first two, and they actually make sense. But what about *temptation*? Rick Warren says, “On the path to spiritual maturity, even temptation becomes a stepping-stone rather than a stumbling block when you realize that it is just as much an occasion to do the right thing as it is to do the wrong thing. Temptation simply provides the choice. While temptation is Satan’s primary weapon to destroy you, God wants to use it to develop you. Every time you choose to do good instead of sin, you are growing in the character of Christ” (p. 201). *There is always a way out*.

Is it a sin when you are tempted? Take a minute to look at Hebrews 4:15 before you answer that question. Martin Luther illustrated the difference between temptation and sin when he said, “You cannot keep birds from flying over your head, but you can keep them from building a nest in your hair.” It comes down to whether you choose to dwell on or carry out the temptation. *There is always a way out*.

“You may sometimes feel that a temptation is too overpowering for you to bear, but that’s a lie from Satan. God has promised never to allow more *on* you than he puts *within* you to handle it. He will not permit any temptation that you could not overcome” (p. 209). *There is always a way out*.

1. Read James 1:12-16. What are some reasons for resisting temptation? Do you think it gets easier as you grow closer to God? (1:12; Hebrews 4:15-16)
2. Where does temptation come from? (1:13 Luke 4:1-2))
3. Warren identifies a 4-step process that leads from temptation to sin.
 - a. Desire (1:14; Mark 7:21-23)
 - b. Doubt (1:6-8; Hebrews 3:12)
 - c. Deception (1:16, John 8:44)
 - d. Disobedience (1:15; 4:17)
4. James gives some practical suggestions for defeating temptation. What is most helpful to you?
James 1:19-21
James 1:22-25
James 3:2
James 4:6-10 (also, 1 Peter 5:6-11)
James 4:17
James 5:7-11
James 5:16
James 5:19-20
5. What are some practical implications and applications of 1 Corinthians 10:11-13?

“Remember that the temptations that come into your life are no different from what others experience.

And God is faithful.

He will keep the temptation from becoming so strong that you can’t stand up against it.

*When you are tempted, **he will show you a way out** so that you will not give in to it.”*

(1 Corinthians 10:13 NLT)