

Overcoming Temptation

1 Samuel 26

Introduction:

1. Webster's defines "tempt" as, "entice to do wrong by promise of pleasure or gain." Have you ever been tempted? Am I tempting you to lie by you saying that you've never been tempted? Seriously, all of us have been through temptation.
2. Even Christ Himself was led into the wilderness where he was "*tempted of the devil.*" Of course, the difference with Christ is that He never gave in to Satan's temptations. He was tempted in all points like we are, "*yet without sin.*" Hebrews 4:15
3. Temptation comes from many different sources:
 - Temptation can come from Satan. 1 Corinthians 7:5; 1 Thessalonians 3:5
 - Temptation can come from our own fleshly lusts. James 1:13-14; Matthew 26:41
 - Temptation can come from other people. Matthew 22:18; Luke 20:23; John 8:6
 - Temptation can come from a desire for wealth. 1 Timothy 6:9
4. We all have experienced temptation, and we all know what it is to be overcome by temptation. It's not a good feeling when you compromise what you know is right and what you know is God's will for temporary gratification. It brings heartache.
5. But, the good news is that every believer can overcome temptation. Christ overcame it and, remember, if you have trusted Christ, He now lives in you!
6. In our text, David encounters incredible temptation. He has the opportunity to take revenge on the man who had been hunting him and trying to kill him - King Saul.
7. But, David overcame this temptation and did what was right. How did David overcome such incredible temptation to sin? There are some very applicable lessons for us here.

First, David refused to allow the sin of others to influence him to sin. vs. 1-5

1. Read verses 1-5. David snuck up to the place where Saul and his men had set up camp. A deep sleep from the Lord had fallen on all the men in Saul's camp (vs. 12).
2. Here is the man that had lied to David, tried to kill him numerous times, broken promises to David, taken David's wife while he was gone and gave her to another man, etc. Here is that man, snoring away within spitting distance of David.
 - There is a voice that says, "David, take matters into your hands. Revenge is sweet. Put an end to all this foolishness right now. He is nothing but scum. He deserves everything he is getting."
3. Can you imagine the temptation? But David would not allow the sin of Saul to influence him to sin and commit murder. Don't misunderstand. I am not saying

- that self defense is wrong. If Saul was coming at David with a spear, David would have every right to defend himself. You remember Goliath. But this wasn't the case.
4. In this case, David knew it would be wrong to murder the king of Israel. God had anointed Saul and God could dispose of him. vs. 10-11a
 5. Many times we allow the sin of others to justify **our** sins. "I cheated him because he..." "I committed adultery because my wife..." "I stole it because he did this or that to me."
 6. Let's read what Paul instructed believers in Romans 12:19 and 21. Have you ever heard the expression, "Two wrongs don't make a right?" How true this is. Never allow the sin of others to influence you to sin.

Second, David refused to allow friends to influence him to sin. vs. 6-8

1. David decided to take a closer look at the situation (vs. 6). Abishai was David's nephew, and appears to be cut out of the same mold as David. Two against three thousand? The other two were thinking, "We'll pray for you guys!"
2. Abishai wasn't going with David to just examine the landscape. He was ready to do business (vs. 7-8). "David, you just say the word and I will shish kabob Saul with his own sword. Nobody will hear a peep, and I won't have to strike him a second time."
3. Notice David's response in verse 9. This is amazing. David would not allow friends to influence him to do wrong.
4. What will you do when other people say to you, "You owe it to yourself. You deserve it. Go for it. You only live once. Everybody does it. It's the opportunity of a lifetime!"
5. This is when you have to say to yourself, "*If sinners entice thee, consent thou not.*" Proverbs 1:10; cf. Ephesians 5:11; Proverbs 7:21-23
6. You will give account to God, not your friends, for your choices. You will have to live with the consequences of your choices, not your friends. David knew this. Abishai may have been the instrument, but David would have been responsible.

Third, David refused to allow circumstances to influence him to sin. vs. 9-12

1. In verse 12 it says that a deep sleep had fallen on Saul and his men from the Lord. It is the same word used in Genesis 2:21 to describe the sleep which God caused to fall upon Adam when He formed Eve out of Adam's side.
2. Notice that Abishai reasoned in verse 8, "*God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand today.*" He reasons, "David, this must be God's will for you to eliminate Saul. The stars are aligned. Circumstances show you that God is in this."
3. Don't we use the same excuse to justify wrong actions and bad decisions so many times? You have heard me warn you over and over again about the danger of trying to read circumstances to discern God's will. God speaks to you from His Word, not from the subjective circumstances of life.

4. David wasn't going to make an emotional decision based on circumstances; his decision would be based upon God's Word. vs. 11-12
5. "But David, it must be God's will. Look at this opportunity that God has given you." There has been many an "opportunity" that has led a believer right down a dead end street and out of a right fellowship with the Lord. Don't ever interpret a circumstance as a divine "okay" to sin. You will always regret it later.

Fourth, David totally rested in the Lord. vs. 13-25

1. David took Saul's spear and water bottle and went way over to the top of another hill and began to holler to wake up Saul's men (vs. 13-14). Saul knew it was David. vs. 17
2. David basically said, "I have your spear and I could have killed you real easy, but I didn't. This should show you the innocence of my heart."
3. Saul's heart was melted and he was overcome by David's kindness (vs. 21). Saul was so pitiful. He was up and down like a roller coaster. What a shame when your biography is summed up with that one sentence, "*I have played the fool.*"
4. David said, "Send a man over to come and fetch your spear." But then I love verses 23 and 24. What a contrast between these two men.
 - Saul's trust was in his body guard, Abner, and the three thousand men around him.
 - David's trust was completely in the Lord. He knew he didn't need to take matters into his own hands. He could leave it with the Lord, and God was faithful and trustworthy.
5. When temptation comes into our lives, we have a clear choice. We can either take matters into our own hands and do what we think is best for us or will bring us the most pleasure and gratification, or we can completely trust God and His Word and rest in Him.

In Conclusion:

1. When temptation comes, our choices will not only affect our future, but also those around us. Our choices alter our lives forever and have incredible impact on the course of our lives.
2. Overcoming temptation and doing what is right is seldom easy, but you will never be sorry for doing what is right.
3. If we can apply these principles from David's life, we can overcome temptation and make wise choices in every area of our lives.