

Always a Way Out

1 Corinthians 10:13

No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

Temptation in itself is not sin. Jesus was tempted. Giving in to the temptation is sin. The devil's goal is to use temptation to lead us away from Christ and destroy our faith. The Lord never tempts for that end. He tests us to help us grow stronger in our faith in him. It is meant to draw us into God's waiting arms.

As sinful human beings there all kinds of things that the devil can use to tempt us. Alcoholism, drug abuse, illnesses, poverty, hunger, abundance of wealth and the greed to want more, misuse of position and power are but a few examples that can become stumbling blocks for us.

The Apostle Paul was warning the Corinthians about being complacent and their pride. But he quickly adds a corresponding word of encouragement. What they and we will encounter are the trials that are common to all humanity. Others have survived and so can we. In fact God surrounds us with people we know who have done corresponding or even greater service in the face of great difficult circumstances.

The Corinthians will not be tested beyond their God-given capacity and neither will we. God in his grace always provides a way from falling, and God desires to help all. Psalm 37:23-24 says: "By the Lord the steps of a man are made secure, and then he [God] delights in his path; though he [a man] fall, he shall not be cast headlong, for the Lord is the stay of his hand." God knows our strength and staying power and will not let temptation exceed it. He also supplies encouragement when temptations come, for "he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it." The "way out" of temptation is the ability to bear it, or we can bear temptation because God has promised "a way out." "God has arranged...that we need not fall."

With every trial he will provide strength to endure "one day at a time," and he will also in his own good time create the specific "way out." Because God has promised to remain with His people, we are never left in a losing situation. His grace provides new opportunities for us to be faithful.

God provides many helps and the greatest is his Word and Sacrament. Through these we are assured of our final victory. It is through these we know that Jesus has overcome death and devil when he died on the cross and rose again.

Prayer: Dear Lord, thank you for the assurance that we will never be overwhelmed by the hard times in live. Thank you also to guarantee that you are always with us through every circumstance in our lives. Amen