

No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it. 1 Corinthians 10:13 NIV

Sometimes temptation feels like it knows us in a deep personal way, like an old friend coming to help, or a lover familiar with our ways, offering comfort in a difficult world. Remember, it is never a sin to just be tempted; Jesus was tempted. Please note this though; He always immediately spoke against the temptation!!!

What should we do when temptation feels so right? When faithfulness to biblical obedience feels flat, unfair, like it's meant only for others or simply too difficult at the time? After all, we know our Lord's love for us is "unconditional," a purpose driven verb, not just an emotional feeling. He loved David after murder and adultery as much as before; didn't He?

There is actually a lot we can do regarding temptation, but it's important to know up front that our efforts will rarely free us from some form of suffering in the process.

If the question is: "*How do we say no to temptation and avoid any or all suffering at the same time?*" 1 Corinthians 10:13 does not state the answer and I don't have that answer either.

In reality, suffering in this depraved world is a part of life, whether we choose to give in to temptation or resist it. The options are not to suffer or to be free from suffering; the options are – to suffer from destructive guilt or to experience redemptive suffering.

This isn't to say we're meant to pursue suffering or bring it upon ourselves. Nor are we to walk into temptation like it's a test. It is to say we can choose whether or not to open ourselves up to God's transformative, sanctifying work in the temptation and suffering. Temptation always brings with it a kind of suffering. To say no to sin that seems to fit so well is a form of suffering.

Temptation always brings these same options: We can choose to shake our fist at God, insisting He is being a miserable tyrant for refusing what seems so right. Or we can submit our desires to God, accepting that we are His Creation, not our own, and that He knows us better than we know ourselves, and better than any satanically depraved temptation does.

Where is the mercy of God in all of this? WHERE IS THE CROSS???

It is central to all of it. Mercy does not remove all temptation; it meets us in it. The cross of Christ does not remove all temptation or the suffering that comes with it. The cross unites us with Him in our temptation and transforms us into His image through it.

Yes, there is a great reprieve in the battle. Life is not just about resisting. God gives rest, but temptations will come. Remember if we could resist all suffering, the opportunity to unite with Christ's suffering would be subdued too. We would not experience this union that provides the opportunity to grow in Christ-likeness to the fullest measure without some suffering.

Let's pray that sin loses its luster, and that God's will becomes all we desire. But while sin yet shines, as long as any part of our frame still reverberates with its song, let us humbly resist it. Pray "*Lord deliver me from the sin of (Fill in the blank, lust, greed, pride, porn, whatever) in Christ's Name.*"

Now read "*Tongue Authority*" on www.skipelmore.com