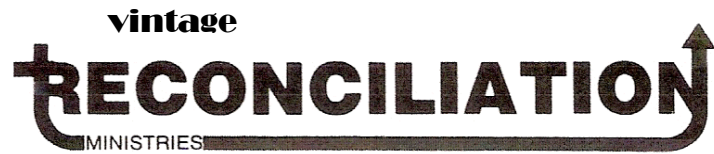


Why Am I Still Tempted?



*This article was originally published in a 1985 Reconciliation Ministries newsletter and is part of our vintage newsletter series – a series of newsletter articles that were published in the early days of Reconciliation Ministries which are still relevant for today. This article applies to those who are struggling with **any** sin, not just homosexuality. It was written by the ministry founder and then director, Jack Hickey, who continues to celebrate over 35 years of walking in sexual and relational wholeness.*

No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it. 1 Corinthians 10:13



If I were to give one question that comes up most in our counseling, it would be about temptation. Many feel that they have never been fully delivered from their sin, because they still face temptations. "How can I be free from homosexuality," I am often asked, "when I still have homosexual temptations?" Much of this type of questioning is due to a misunderstanding of what temptation is.

To start, Jesus never said He would take temptation away. He said He would help us overcome it and deliver us out of it. Second Peter tells us that, "*The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation.*" He is not taking temptation away, but getting us through it.

The enemy, Satan, is a dirty fighter. He is not going to tempt us in an area that we do not care about. He will hit the weakest spot, in an area that is familiar. Take, for example, a person who has been in a homosexual lifestyle for most of his life. He comes to Christ and turns from his sins. He is **at that moment** made a new creature (2 Corinthians 5:17) and a child of God (1 John 3:2). There are still areas in need of healing and ministry, but the deliverance is now. When Satan tempts him – as he will do – it would be useless to do so with heterosexual lust. There would be no battle because there is no desire.

Satan will use the area that is most familiar, the homosexual lust. Let me add here, lust is sin, no matter what form it is in. There is no such thing as "normal" lust. [Editor's note 2010: *As the issues fueling the homosexual lust are healed and/or repented of in the individual's heart, men and women who formerly embraced homosexuality can, and do, develop appropriate sexual attractions to members of the opposite sex. As is the case with every sin, it takes time for old sinful patterns to be broken and for new healthy patterns to be established. As new temptations develop, old temptations may still remain.*]



Furthermore, we are not identified by our temptations. Just because we are tempted in an area of our past does not mean we are still in bondage to it. The best example of this is in Hebrews 4:15, *"For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was **in all points tempted as we are**, yet without sin."* I believe that Jesus was faced with homosexual temptations, too. He had to have been, if He can sympathize with my weakness. Yet, He was without sin. Those temptations did not make Him a homosexual, an adulterer, or a drunkard. He was still the Christ, without sin.

If Jesus, who was as much man as any of us, was not identified with His temptations, why should we be? He did that so He could be a help and an example to us. *"He himself has suffered, being tempted; He is able to aid those who are tempted."* (Hebrews 2:18)

Hebrews 4:15 gives us another very important key: **temptation is not sin!** Many feel that whenever they are tempted they have sinned. Remember, Jesus was tempted and was without sin. Sin comes in when one does not handle the lust, or one even carries it into action. When temptation comes we are to turn from it. One escapes by the route Jesus made for us (1 Corinthians 10:13).



Once we see that temptations are part of the spiritual warfare we are in, we can start dealing with them as such. **We have victory over temptation through Jesus Christ.** He has gone before us to make a way. He is our Great High priest before the throne of God.

One of the best passages of Scripture that deals with temptation is James 1:12-16:

Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been proved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He himself tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is drawn by his own desires and enticed. Then when desire is conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full grown, brings forth death."

In closing, let me say this: If we do not understand temptation, and have given into it, there is still hope. God, knowing our weaknesses, has made provision for us. First John 1:9 says: *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and **to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**"* This is not an open door to sin, but a way that even the weakest can still live in victory with Jesus.

If you need help with sexual and/or relationship sins, call 586.739.5114 and found out how Reconciliation Ministries can help you walk in sexual and relational wholeness.