



Flirting with Temptation

Judges 2:1-3

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- “Then the Angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said: ‘I led you up from Egypt and brought you to the land of which I swore to your fathers; and I said, “I will never break My covenant with you. 2 And you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; you shall tear down their altars.” But you have not obeyed My voice. Why have you done this? 3 Therefore I also said, “I will not drive them out before you; but they shall be thorns in your side, and their gods shall be a snare to you.”””

Flirting with Temptation

- “Men have known from the beginning that it is not temptation without warning nor overwhelming temptation that strikes him down; it is the temptation one does not fear enough to flee, but carelessly permits to dwell nearby.” *(prb)*

Flirting with Temptation

- “No evil dooms us hopelessly except the evil we love, and desire to continue in, and make no effort to escape from.” (*George Eliot*)
- “Temptation likes best those who think they have a natural immunity, for it may laugh all the harder when they succumb.” (*Catheryne Valente*)
- “Most people would like to be delivered from temptation but would like it to keep in touch.” (*Robert Orben*)
- “No temptation can gravitate to a man unless there is that in his heart which is capable of responding to it.” (*James Allen*)

Flirting with Temptation

- Solomon - Prov. 4:14-15 - “Do not enter the path of the wicked, And do not walk in the way of evil. 15 Avoid it, do not travel on it; Turn away from it and pass on.”
- Jesus Christ - Luke 22:40 - “When He came to the place, He said to them, Pray that you may not enter into temptation.”
- “What makes resisting temptation difficult for many people is that they don't want to discourage it completely.” *(Franklin Jones)*

What Flirting With Temptation Does

- It sets us up for a fall into sin.
 - Gen. 39:7-10 - “And it came to pass after these things that his master's wife cast longing eyes on Joseph, and she said, Lie with me. 8 But he refused and said to his master's wife, ‘Look, my master does not know what is with me in the house, and he has committed all that he has to my hand. 9 There is no one greater in this house than I, nor has he kept back anything from me but you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?’ 10 So it was, as she spoke to Joseph day by day, that he did not heed her, to lie with her or to be with her.”

What Flirting With Temptation Does

- It sets us up for chastening by the Lord.
 - Gen. 3:14-19 - “So the LORD God said to the serpent: ‘Because you have done this, You are cursed more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you shall go, And you shall eat dust All the days of your life. 15 And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.’ 16 To the woman He said: ‘I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; In pain you shall bring forth children; Your desire shall be for your husband, And he shall rule over you.’ 17 Then to Adam He said, ‘Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, “You shall not eat of it”: Cursed is the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life. 18 Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, And you shall eat the herb of the field. 19 In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you are, And to dust you shall return.’”

What Flirting With Temptation Does

- It sets us up for “divided allegiance.”
 - James 4:8 - “Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.”



What Flirting With Temptation Does

- It sets us up for the war between flesh and spirit.
 - Mark 14:67-71 - “And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked at him and said, ‘You also were with Jesus of Nazareth.’ 68 But he denied it, saying, ‘I neither know nor understand what you are saying.’ And he went out on the porch, and a rooster crowed. 69 And the servant girl saw him again, and began to say to those who stood by, ‘This is one of them.’ 70 But he denied it again. And a little later those who stood by said to Peter again, ‘Surely you are one of them; for you are a Galilean, and your speech shows it.’ 71 Then he began to curse and swear, ‘I do not know this Man of whom you speak!’”

What Flirting With Temptation Does

- It entertains our desire for the things of the old life.
 - Luke 9:62 - “But Jesus said to him, ‘No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.’”

Why We Flirt With Temptation

- We believe God has not fulfilled our needs.
 - Jer. 12:1-2 - “Righteous are You, O LORD, when I plead with You; Yet let me talk with You about Your judgments. Why does the way of the wicked prosper? Why are those happy who deal so treacherously? 2 You have planted them, yes, they have taken root; They grow, yes, they bear fruit. You are near in their mouth But far from their mind.”

Why We Flirt With Temptation

- We have a physical body that still desires sin.
 - Gal. 5:16-18 - “I say then: ‘Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.’ 17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.”

Why We Flirt With Temptation

- We believe we can still be viewed as faithful Christians.
 - Num. 32:23 - “But if you do not do so, then take note, you have sinned against the LORD; and rest assured your sin will find you out.”

Why We Flirt With Temptation

- We believe we can't break old habits, even with the help of God.
 - 1Cor. 10:13 - "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."

Why We Flirt With Temptation

- We believe we can control it and it will not escalate.
 - Luke 12:16-20 - “Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: ‘The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. And he thought within himself, saying, “What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?” So he said, “I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. And I will say to my soul, ‘Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.’” But God said to him, “Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?’”

How To Cease Flirting With Temptation

- Make no provision for the flesh.
 - Rom. 13:14 - “But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and sat down.”
 - Neh. 4:9 - “Nevertheless we made our prayer to our God, and because of them we set a watch against them day and night.”
 - Job 31:1 - “I have made a covenant with my eyes; Why then should I look upon a young woman?”

How To Cease Flirting With Temptation

- Change our thinking.
 - Rom. 12:2 - “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”
 - Eph. 4:22-24 - “That you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, 23 and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.”

How To Cease Flirting With Temptation

- Learn to recognize our weaknesses.
 - 1Cor. 6:18 - “Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body.”
 - Psalm 119:101 - “I have restrained my feet from every evil way, That I may keep Your word.”

How To Cease Flirting With Temptation

- Learn to recognize our strengths.
 - Ex. 31:1-5 - “Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 2 ‘See, I have called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. 3 And I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, 4 to design artistic works, to work in gold, in silver, in bronze, 5 in cutting jewels for setting, in carving wood, and to work in all manner of workmanship.’”

How To Cease Flirting With Temptation

- Put those strengths to work.
 - 1Cor. 12:11, 18 - “But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills... 18 But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased.”
 - Ex. 36:1-3 - “And Bezalel and Aholiab, and every gifted artisan in whom the LORD has put wisdom and understanding, to know how to do all manner of work for the service of the sanctuary, shall do according to all that the LORD has commanded. 2 Then Moses called Bezalel and Aholiab, and every gifted artisan in whose heart the LORD had put wisdom, everyone whose heart was stirred, to come and do the work. 3 And they received from Moses all the offering which the children of Israel had brought for the work of the service of making the sanctuary. So they continued bringing to him freewill offerings every morning.”

Flirting with Temptation

- “A silly idea is current that good people do not know what temptation means. This is an obvious lie. Only those who try to resist temptation know how strong it is. A man who gives in to temptation after five minutes simply does not know what it would have been like an hour later. That is why bad people, in one sense, know very little about badness. They have lived a sheltered life by always giving in.” (C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*)