

Temptation, Sin, & Accountability



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Introduction

In order to understand accountability for sin we first must look at temptation and what it actually is, then we need to look at what the Biblical explanations of sin are, and by that I mean what the Bible states as such “is sin”, and finally I will do my best to explain what the Bible teaches about accountability. There have been many books written on all three of these subjects. My goal is not to write a book, but instead I will attempt to give a condensed explanation on each subject so that the reader will gain a sound basic knowledge of Temptation, Sin, & Accountability.

As a final note to the reader I feel that it is important to mention that all Scripture mentioned is from the ESV translation of the Bible, and all Hebrew and Greek words and definitions are from “The New Strong’s Expanded Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible” (Thomas Nelson, ISBN 978-1-4185-4237-5)

Temptation

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 a way of escape, that you may be able to endure it. (1 Corinthians 10:13)

As we can see from the verse above there is no such thing as an uncommon temptation. But there are many different variations of the same type of temptation that can make them unique to individuals. A good example of this is addiction, if we look at all of the different categories of addiction we see things like smoking, drugs, alcohol, and gambling. Here we see 4 unique temptations, but they all can be basically categorized as “addiction” (or idolatry if you will). Considering the categorization of temptations will help us to understand how “*No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man*”

Being tempted will not kill us. If we look at the story of Job we find that God will only allow things to happen to His people that they can handle, even though at the time of temptation, it may seem unbearable, God knows that we can handle it and He will help us through it. All that we have to do is utilize our free will. That is where, “*God is faithful, and He will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation He will also provide a way of escape, the you may be able to endure it*”.

Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him. Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death. (James 1:26-27)

When hard times and temptations come upon us we need to stand firm in the Word of God. The one thing that we must never do is to blame God for the temptation. The scripture above states that God cannot be tempted therefore He tempts no one. Temptations begin in our minds as a dwelling thought, then it moves to our heart and emotion mixes with it, and finally we manifest it to the physical and give birth to sin.

The LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it." (Genesis 4:6-7)

The Hebrew word for "well" used here is "tatab" (yaw-tab') it does not mean to amend or improve your ways, but to make ones course with that which is pleasing to God and that which is well pleasing in His sight.

The verses above is a part of the conversation God had with Cain after he killed Abel. Notice what it says about sin, it's desire is to destroy us, but if we live in away that is pleasing to God then we will have the ability to rule over the sin that is burdening us. Now the hard part, we must read and study our Bible regularly to know how to live in a pleasing way to God.

Biblical Definitions of Sin

There are 6 New Testament definitions of sin (that I am aware of), that is to say the scripture states such and such “is sin”. I will do my best to explain each of these, but I feel that it is of the utmost important that the reader keep in mind that sin is sin and no sin is greater than any other sin. My goal is to briefly discuss the Biblical definitions of them so that we may gain a better understanding of what sin actually is.

Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; (John 16:7-9)

The Greek word for “believe” is “pisteuo” (pist-yoo’-o) it means not to just believe, but also be persuaded of, to place confidence in, to trust, and signifies reliance upon, not mere credence. It is often translated “commit onto”, “commit ones trust”, “be committed unto”.

To say that we believe in Jesus does not mean that we just believe that He is real and that He is the Son of God. What it actually means is that we **know** He is real and **know** that He is the only begotten Son of God, to the point of placing our confidence in Him , relying on the fact the His Word and Life is absolute truth. Another part of believing in Jesus is that we commit our lives and everything we have, do, or say onto Christ.

Do not, for the sake of food, destroy the work of God. Everything is indeed clean, but it is wrong for anyone to make another stumble by what he eats. It is good not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that causes your brother to stumble. The faith that you have, keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the one who has no reason to pass judgment on himself for what he approves. But whoever has doubts is condemned if he eats, because the eating is not from faith. For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin. (Romans 14:20-23)

This scripture is talking about partaking food and drink that was either prepared by a pagan or at a non-christian feast or both. God provides all food it’s ok to eat. But the last sentence is the most important, it tells us that everything we have, or will receive must proceed from faith. In other words we must recognize that it comes from God Himself, whether it be food, drink, cloths, shelter, jobs, family, church you attend, and so on, it is mandatory that we recognize that every good thing in our lives comes from God to do otherwise is sin.

My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory.But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. (James 2:1, 9)

As we see above to hold one person in a higher esteem than another is sin. No matter the circumstance whether it be financial status, social status, political views, race, religion, or even whether we like a person or not, we can never think of someone as more important as someone else. This is such a common thing in our day that people hold others in a higher esteem simply because of a commonality of a sports team, and not much is thought of it. It's one thing to joke around about such things, but to actually think an individual is more important than someone else for any reason is "showing partiality".

So whoever knows to do the right thing and fails to do it, for him it is sin. (James 4:17)

The Greek word used here "right" is "kalos" (kal-os), it means that which is ethnically good, right, noble, or honorable.

The key to understanding this definition of sin is the phrase "to him it is sin". Sometimes the Holy Spirit will inspire us to do things that at other times we may not give it a second thought. A good example I like to give to explain "kalos" is, if my brother and I were walking down the street noticing a piece of trash and the Holy Spirit moves me by bringing it to my attention that the right thing to do is to pick it up and throw it into a trash can, my brother may not think anything of it, if we continue to ignore the piece of trash and keep walking, then I've sinned simply because I knew that picking it up was the right thing to do. But my brother on the other hand not thinking anything about it did not sin in this situation. Remember the key to this definition is the phrase "to him it is sin".

Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness, sin is lawlessness.
(1 John 3:4)

The Greek word for lawlessness is "anomia" (an-om-ee'-ah), it refers not to the one living without the Law, but one who acts contrary to the Law.

As we can see from this definition the word lawlessness is not directed towards someone who does not know what is expected of them biblically, it is directed to us who knows what the Bible expects of us and live contrary to it anyway. In order to practice lawlessness you must somewhat know the law.

All wrongdoing is sin, but there is sin that does not lead to death. **(1 John 5:17)**

The Greek word for wrongdoing is “adikia” (ad-ee-kee'ah), it denotes unrighteousness, a condition of not being right with God, according to the standard of His holiness and righteousness, or with man, according to the standard of what man knows to be right by his conscience.

Wrongdoing is not just doing wrong according to God’s standards but also what we know is wrong. We begin to understand what is right or wrong at a fairly early age. When we conscientiously and knowingly do wrong we sin, it doesn’t matter if our wrong doing is actually listed in the Bible or not. Right is right and wrong is wrong, and we have no excuses because we know better. If I walk past a seven year old kid and push him down into a mud puddle, no matter where I’m at in the world that is wrong. To do wrong is to sin.

Accountability

The first thing to consider when discussing accountability is “the blame game”. The Bible tells us that we are responsible for our own sins look at the following verse,

Fathers shall not be put to death because of their children, nor shall children be put to death because of their fathers. Each one shall be put to death for his own sin.

(Deuteronomy 24:16)

Here God tells the Israelites that each person is accountable for their own sins. We can't blame Adam and Eve or anybody else for our sins they're our sins. And we'll be punished for only our sins.

On the day of judgment we will be held accountable for both our words and our actions.

Our words

If any man thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless. **(James 1:26-27)**

I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak, for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned. **(Matthew 12:36-37)**

The first verse states that if we can't manage our tongues then nobody will pay any attention to what we have to say when we're trying to spread the Gospel. This is how we are accountable to man. Humans often judge the sincerity and truthfulness of someone on the way they talk, if our common speech is filled with things like lying, foul language, gossiping and so forth, no one will listen to a word that we have to say about God, they'll think something like "He/She is just being a fake Christian, you should hear how they normally speak and act. Then instead of winning souls for Christ we're losing them.

The second verse tells us that we will be held accountable on the day of judgment for every word we speak. Think about that "every word" even if we vocalize something under our breath to blow off steam we will be held accountable. If you think about it that's pretty serious. Then we have to add in the first verse above, what if God sends someone to me and I get an urge to talk about Jesus but because of my daily speaking habits they don't listen to a word I say, I'll be held accountable to God for that as well.

Our Actions

But I discipline my body and keep it under control, least after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified. **(1 Corinthians 9:27)**

For it is written, “As I live says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.” So then each one of us will give an account of himself to God.
(Romans 14:11-12)

Much like our words the way we live is a factor on whether people will listen to us as we try to minister, also as we see in the second verse above that on the day of judgment we will have to give an account of ourselves to God, this includes our character, our thought, our actions, etc.

The way we live here on earth has everything to do with how others will receive the Gospel of Christ from us, as well as whether or not God will tell us “well done good and faithful servant”.

In closing I feel that it is important to mention that all of our sins are gone from before when we became Christians, but we will have be accountable for the sins that we committed after coming to Christ, does that mean we’re all going to go to hell? No, look at it this way if you had a child and they stole \$20 from your wallet or purse, would you punish that child? Probable so, right, but would you hate them and throw the child out of your house? Heavens no! So it will be with us at judgment, we may be punished for some of the things we’ve done after becoming Christians, But God does not hate his children, nor would He throw us out of His house (Heaven).

I hope that this reading has been helpful in understanding temptation, is a.nd accountability.....May God bless you in your daily lives

