

How to Live in Victory

Study Guide for Small Group Discussion and Personal Application
Lynn Haven UMC – September 20, 2020 – Pastor Craig Carter

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This is our third week in our sermon series titled “**How to Live**” based on the New Testament Letter of James. As a congregation we are following a reading plan through James and studying selected passages. Check out mylhumc.net/grow for more information.

According to scripture, life is a series of tests. These challenges help us to grow stronger, and to become who God intends for us to be. Last week we studied trials – challenges that come upon us from the outside – and we discovered that when we patiently endure them and depend on God to get us through them, we grow in maturity.

Temptations are a different kind of test – Satan throws them at us to get us off course, to weaken us through shame and guilt, and to isolate us from other Christians. Satan wants us to fail these tests, but God wants us to pass them all, to persevere, and to live in victory.

God blesses those who patiently endure testing and temptation. When they pass the test, they will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him. (James 1:12 NLT)

According to James, this is how we live in victory over temptation:

Remember, when you are being tempted, do not say, “God is tempting me.” God is never tempted to do wrong, and he never tempts anyone else. Temptation comes from our own desires, which entice us and drag us away. These desires give birth to sinful actions. And when sin is allowed to grow, it gives birth to death. So, don’t be misled, my dear brothers and sisters. (James 1:13-16 NLT)

There are three important truths about temptation:

1) The Certainty of Temptation

Temptation is inevitable. It is a reality we all face on a daily basis. It will come, in a variety of shapes and sizes, in different seasons of life.

2) The Consequences of Temptation

Temptation is simply when we face a choice – our response determines whether it becomes sin or not.

Temptation comes from our own desires, which entice us and drag us away. These desires give birth to sinful actions. And when sin is allowed to grow, it gives birth to death. (James 1:14-15 NLT)

This is the process: Desire → Deception → Disobedience → Death

The key to living in victory is this - if we are being tempted in some area, we should not ignore the warning signs. We need to deal decisively with it; otherwise, we may find ourselves in the grip of sin, far removed from God and His will. The sooner we deal with it, the better and the greater possibility we have for victory.

3) The Conquest of Temptation

God blesses those who patiently endure testing and temptation. Afterward they will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him. (James 1:12 NLT)

The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure. (1 Corinthians 10:13 NIV)

Overcoming temptation is possible. God always provides a way to escape it. There are three things we need to live in victory:

Friends + Flee + Find Power in Scripture and Prayer

For Discussion:

⇒ What kind of temptations do you deal with on a regular basis? (You do not have to share these with everyone, but you must be honest with yourself or you will never win the struggle against them!)

⇒ Can you explain the sin cycle of “Desire → Deception → Disobedience → Death” in your own words? Talk through each step and come up with an example of what this might look like.

⇒ Which part of the “Friends + Flee + Find Power in Scripture and Prayer” are you strongest in? The weakest? What do you need to do to strengthen your weak area and find victory over temptation?

Don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. (James 1:22a NLT)