

## Temptation Outline (Quotes from John Owen – Overcoming Sin and Temptation)

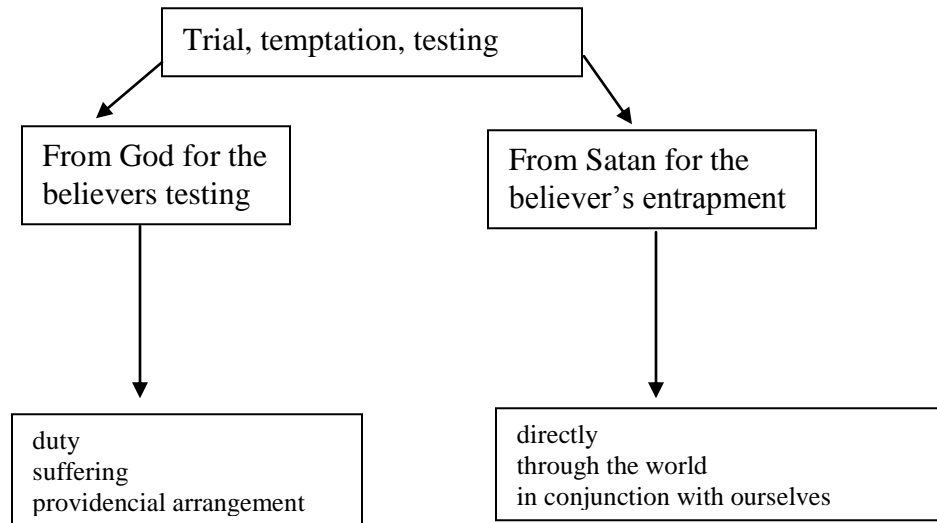
*“So temptation is like a knife, that may either cut the meat or the throat of a man; it may be his food or his poison, his exercise or his destruction.” (p.152)*

### I. The Universality of Temptation – what is it? a. What it is

*“Temptation, then, in general, is any thing, state, way, or condition that, upon any account whatsoever, has a force or efficacy to seduce, to draw the mind and heart of a man from its obedience, which God requires of him, into any sin, in any degree of it whatsoever.*

*In particular, that is a temptation to any man which causes or occasions him to sin, or in anything to go off from his duty, either by bringing evil into his heart, or drawing out that evil that is in the heart, or any other way divert him from communion with God and that constant, equal, universal obedience, in matter and manner, that is required of him.*

*For the clearing of this description I shall only observe, that though temptation seems to be of a more active importance, and so to denote only the power of seduction to sin itself, yet in the Scripture it is commonly taken in a neuter sense, and denotes the matter of the temptation or the thing whereby we are tempted. And this is a ground of the description I have given of it. Be it what it will, that from anything whatsoever, within us or without us, has advantage to hinder in duty, or to provoke unto or in any way to occasion sin – that is temptation, and so to be looked on. Be it business, employment, course of life, company, affections, nature, or corrupt design, relations, delights, name, reputation, esteem, abilities, parts of excellencies of body or mind, place, dignity, art – so far as they further or occasion the promotion of the ends before mentioned, they are all of them no less truly temptations than the most violent solicitations of Satan or allurements of the world, and that soul lies at the brink of ruin who discerns it not. And this will be further discovered in our process.*” (p.156)



“to fall into temptation” and be entangled in it.

*“It is, as the apostle expresses it, ‘to fall into temptation’ (1 Tim. 6:9), as a man falls into a pit or deep place where [there] are gins\* or snares, wherewith he is entangled; the man is not presently killed and destroyed, but he is entangled and detained – he knows not how to get free or be at liberty” (p.160)*  
 (\* traps)

*“When we suffer a temptation to enter into us, then we ‘enter into temptation.’ While it knocks at the door we are at liberty; but when any temptation comes in and parleys with the heart, reasons with the mind, entices and allures the affections, be it a long or a short time, do it thus insensibly and imperceptibly, or do the soul take notice of it, we ‘enter into temptation.’”*  
 (p.160)

- b. The inevitability of temptation  
1 Co. 10:1-13

## II. The Sources of Temptation

- a. Our sinful nature  
Jas 1:12-15  
Ro 7:18-23

- we need to be deeply indignant over our sin.

*“If this indignation be not daily heightened, but the soul, by conversing with the evil, begins to grow, as it were, familiar with it, not to be startled as formerly, but rather inclines to cry, ‘Is it not a little one?’ then the temptation is coming toward its high noon; lust has then enticed and entangled, and is ready to ‘conceive’ (James 1:15).” (p.162)*

b. Other people

2 Peter 2: 17-22

c. Satan

1 Co 7:5

1 Th 3:5

d. The World

1 Jn 2:16;

e. Attractions which lead to temptation

i. Money 1Ti 6:9-10

ii. Power Dt. 8:17-18; 2 Ch 26:16

iii. Lust Pr. 6:25; 7:21

iv. Pride Pr. 11:2

f. Temptation does not come from God

Jas 1:13

### III. Resisting Temptation

a. Encouragement to those facing temptation

Jas 1:12-15

Heb. 2:18; 4:15-16

Jas 1:2-3;

b. Encouragement to resist

Ro. 6:12-14

c. Help for those facing temptation

Rom. 8:31

Heb 4:15-16

1Jn 2:1

d. Resources to overcome temptation

1 Tim. 6:11-12

Jas. 4 :4-10

e. General directions to preserve a soul from entering into temptation.

i. A clear, abiding apprehension of the great evil that there is in entering into temptation

*“It is a tender frame of spirit, sensible of its own weakness and corruption, of the craft of Satan, of the evil of sin, of the efficacy of temptation, that can perform his duty.”*

*(p.193)*

*“Temptation despised will conquer; and if the heart be made tender and watchful here, half the work of securing a good conversation is over.” (p.194)*

ii. It is not a thing in our own power, to keep and preserve ourselves from entering into temptation

*“To reckon that we have no power or wisdom to keep ourselves from entering into temptation, but must be kept by the power and wisdom of God, is a preserving principle (1 Peter 1:5)” (p.194)*

*“He that looks to God for assistance in a due manner is both sensible of his danger and conscientiously careful in the use of means to preserve himself.” (p.195)*

*“To believe that he will preserve us is a means of preservation; for this God will certainly do, or make a way for us to escape out of temptation, if we fall into it under such a believing frame.” (p.195)*

*“He that would be little in temptation, let him be much in prayer.” (p.196)*

f. Practical suggestions

Mt. 26:41

i. prayer

Mt. 6:13

- *“In this direction, it is not so much the not giving us up to it as the powerful keeping us from it that is intended. The last words are, as it were, exegetical or expository of the former.” (p. 167)*

- Owen renders it *“So deal with us that we may be powerfully delivered from that evil which attends our entering into temptation.” (p.167)*

ii. watching

g. What and how to watch

i. Watch the seasons wherein men usually do “enter into temptation”

- A season of unusual outward prosperity
  - Proverbs 30:8-9, Psalm 30:6,
  - What about Eccles. 7:14? Rejoice in prosperity but watch!
  - “A man in that state is in the midst of snares” (p.198)*
  - “Blessed is he that fears always, but especially in a time of prosperity” (p.198)*
- A time of the slumber of grace, of neglect in communion with God, of formality in duty
- A season of great spiritual enjoyments
  - increased spiritual blessing tends to decrease our watchfulness.

*“Satan sees that, being possessed by the joy before us, we quickly neglect many ways of approach to our souls, wherein he seeks and finds advantages against us.” (p.200)*

- A season of self-confidence  
- 1 Cor. 10:12

ii. Watch the heart itself

- Labor to know your own heart  
*“Uselessness and scandal in professors are branches growing constantly on this root of unacquaintedness with their own frame and temper; and how few are there who will either study them themselves or bear with those who would acquaint them with them.” (p.203)*

- Watch against all that is apt to entangle your natural temper or provoke your corruption
- Lay in provision in store against the approaching of any temptation.

*“Is Satan, the prince of this world, come and find our hearts fortified against his batteries, and provided to hold out, he not only departs, but, as James says he flees.” (p.204)*

- In the first approach of any temptation, as we are all tempted, these directions following are also suited to carry on the work of watching, which we are in the pursuit of:
  1. Be always awake, that you may have an early discovery of your temptation
  2. Consider the aim and tendency of the temptation
  3. Meet your temptation in its entrance with thoughts of faith concerning Christ on the cross
  4. If you have been surprised by temptation and entangled unawares, what should you do?