

# Simply Christ

Gospel Newsletter

*Sharing the simplicity that is in Christ*

## Tempted and Tested

A temptation is not necessarily a lust or even a desire. It is a test. The Greek words translated as *“tempted”* and *“temptation”* in the Bible means *“to test”* and *“a putting to proof.”* The word of God speaks of many types of temptations. There are moral temptations which attempt to entice a person to do evil, but *“temptations”* can also be the hardships or persecutions we endure. When the Apostle Peter spoke of those who were *“in heaviness through manifold temptations”* | Peter 1:6, he was referring to believers who were being persecuted by the adversaries of the gospel. Peter called it *“the fiery trial which is to try you.”* | Peter 4:12.

Jesus was ***“was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.”*** Hebrews 4:15. This verse is simply pointing out that Jesus endured the same hardships, persecutions, rejections, betrayals, and enticements that are common to every child of God. Satan attacked Jesus from every angle, but he could not find or produce sin in his heart. It is certain that Satan set sin in Jesus’ path, but sin in your path is very different from sin in your heart. Things set in your path have no power over you if sin has not found a place in your heart.

In an attempt to justify sin in the hearts of professing believers, some people try to prove Jesus lusted for evil things. This is simply not true. According to His own words, if Jesus had desired to commit evil, he would have been viewed as sinful by God. He said, *“whosoever looks on a woman to lust after her has committed adultery with her already in his heart”* Matthew 5:28. Such things were never in the heart or desire of God’s Son. In the final hours of his earthly ministry, Jesus told His disciples, *“the prince of this world cometh, and has nothing in me.”* John 14:30.

It is important to understand that not every wayward thought is sin. When Satan offered Jesus the power and glory of the kingdoms of this world, it entered his mind as a thought, but Jesus did not desire it and he did not sin, even in his mind. Satan may set enticements before you, and encourage you to partake of it, but thinking about something is not the same as harboring it in your heart. If you are going through a great trial, Satan might speak to you as Job’s wife spoke to him in his hour of testing, saying, **“Curse God and die.”** Job 2:9. Yet, just because Satan speaks something to you does not mean you desire it, or ever would do such a thing. You can respond like Jesus did, saying, *“Get behind me, Satan: you are an offence unto me...”* Matthew 16:23. In Isaiah’s day, God rebuked those who *“...make a man an offender for a word...”* Isaiah 29:21. In our day, many people will try to “make you a sinner for a thought.”

Finally, I once heard a minister say, “When Jesus washed sin from your heart he left you with a neck.” I thought these words were very wise.

Because Jesus has delivered you from sin, you can turn your head away from things that are seductive and inappropriate. You can walk away from entrapments and snares. The Apostle Paul even told us to *“flee fornication.”* I Corinthians 6:18. There are some things you should run from! Just because Christ has made you free, does not mean you can play around with fire. The old adage is still true which says, “If you play with fire, you will get burned!”