

TEMPTATION AND TRIALS

Temptation and Trial -- How to Resist?

Living for God, how achieved? Christians cannot live for Him in their own strength. The flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary (against) the one to the other, so Christians cannot do the things they would. (Galatians 5:17; Romans 7:15-25). Therefore the Bible exhorts Christians to walk in the Spirit, and not fulfill the lust of the flesh (Galatians 5:16). And the Holy Spirit indwells each believer (Ephesians 1:13; Romans 8:9), and gives power to live for God.

The *how* is graphically revealed in Ephesians 5:18. A drunken person is *not himself*, but rather is one *under the influence of* or *under the control of* another force - liquor. The state of drunkenness is the result of steadily imbibing (absorbing) strong drink. In like manner the Christian is to be filled with the Spirit - to be *under the influence of* or *under the control of* the Spirit (*not himself*). As Christians absorb the Word (2 Timothy 2:15; 3:15-17; Psa. 119:11), seek help in prayer (Psalm 138:3; Hebrew 4:16), confess sins (Prov. 28:13; 1 John 1:9), there is strengthening with might by His Spirit in the inner man (Eph. 3:16). The believers are becoming filled with the Spirit and enabled to walk in the Spirit. As temptation assails, "the way to escape" is found, that "believers may be able to bear it". See 1 Cor. 10:13. The Spirit filled man remembers the admonitions of Scripture stored in the heart, that he may not sin against God (Psalm 119:11). Without such support the believer would be sure to fail, but God has "given unto us all things that pertain unto life and Godliness" (2 Peter 1:3).

Every believer is born of the Spirit (John 3:3-6; 1 John 5:1), indwelt by the Spirit, whose presence makes the believer's body a temple (1 Cor. 6:19), and baptized with the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:12, 13; 1 John 2:20, 27), thus sealing him for God (Eph. 1:13; 4:30). Having the Spirit is true of all believers - being filled with the Spirit is the Christian's privilege and duty. (Compare Acts 2:4 with Acts 4:29-31; also Eph. 1:13, 14 with Eph. 5:18.) There is one baptism of the Spirit (which accompanies salvation), but the possibility of many fillings of the Spirit. Read about the fruit of the Spirit in Gal. 5:22. The believer is not to grieve the Holy Spirit of God by sin in the Christian life (Eph. 4:17-32). When sin is present it is to be confessed for forgiveness and cleansing (Prov. 28:13; 1 John 1:9). Nor is the Spirit to be quenched through failure to obey His leadings (1 Thess. 5:19; James 4:17). Rather the believer is to be filled by the Holy Spirit, as indicated in the illustration of Eph. 5:18. The Emmaus course entitled "The Holy Spirit at Work" is interesting and informative.