NOVEMBER 8TH, 2026



The Searcher

Published By

SOUTHAVEN CHURCH of CHRIST

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SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES AND SEEKING THE LOST

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Tennessee Children's Home - Spring Hill, TN
Children's Home Inc. - Paragould, AR

HOW TO HANDLE TEMPTATION

Cody Kilgore

Fish don't bite the hook because they want the hook; they bite because they want what hides the hook. That is temptation. Like the fisherman, Satan doesn't drop his line without bait, advertising the hook; otherwise, temptation wouldn't work. Instead, our adversary advertises the bait: pleasure, not consequence; desire, not death.

We have a level of discernment which is not matched by the fish. We can, if we choose, identify the hook hidden within the bait. James writes to us, encouraging this very thing; he urges us to understand what is happening. He reminds us: there is a reward (Jas. 1:12), the crown of life; there is an enemy (Jas. 1:13), it is not God enticing us to fail; there is a pattern (Jas. 1:14-15), desire leads to enticement; leads to sin leads to death.

James reminds us what temptation does—Jesus shows us what we should do about it.

Know The Word. Jesus was tempted in three points (Matt. 4:3, 6, 9). Each temptation was to make it about Him, rather than His Father. Satisfy your hunger; prove who you are; receive your glory apart from the Father's plan. In each case, Jesus responded to temptation with the quotation, "It is written…" We would do ourselves a disservice by minimizing the power that comes simply from knowing Scripture. Long ago, the question was asked and answered, "How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your word" (Ps. 119:9).

Trust The Word. Knowing the Word alone is not a sufficient defense. Even the enemy says, "It is written…" (Matt. 4:6). The difference between Jesus and Satan is trust—Jesus maintained complete confidence in what God has spoken. That is what lies at the heart of temptation, because temptation challenges us to go against what God has said. When we know what God says, we know what is right; when we trust what God says, we are convinced that His way is best. The same psalmist who knew that the Word needed to guard the way knew that it needed to be hidden, stored within the heart (Ps. 119:11).

Choose The Word. Jesus knew Scripture, trusted Scripture, and then obeyed Scripture. Temptation requires a decision; will we follow what God has settled? Will we hold fast to what He has spoken? Will His commandments serve as the foundation of our life? The worst time to try to make that decision is in the throes of battle. Decide ahead of time! Before anger, decide how you speak; before lust, decide what you allow your eyes to see; before compromise, decide who you serve. Our plea should always be, "With my whole heart I seek you; let me not wander from your commandments!

(Ps. 119:10).

The fish sees the bait; the fisherman knows there is a hook. God sees what is hidden as well, and He brings it into our view. All that is in the world (1 John 2:16-17) … resist. Not because God wishes to withhold pleasure, but because God is committed to our ultimate good. We ought to be committed to the same. Commit to our God. Commit to His Word. In doing so, we receive the highest blessing: eternal life and eternal residence in God's presence. Hold fast. Hold to truth.

HOW TO GROW SPIRITUALLY

Justin Guess

In a society obsessed with the next miracle pill or quick-fix shot, we have lost the ability to focus and build healthy habits for longer-term, beneficial growth. Our current habits have caused our society to become chronically diseased and sick. People constantly look for the next health kick because they know something is wrong, but they don't know how to fix it, or they don't want to work to fix it. Ezra found a community just like this, except they were suffering spiritually. After King Artaxerxes I released them to return to Jerusalem and rebuild their lives, city, and worship, Ezra found a city plagued by serious spiritual sickness. His goal to restore Jerusalem's spiritual health is laid out in Ezra 7:10: "For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the Law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach statutes and ordinances in Israel." In this verse, we find four points that will help us develop proper habits to grow spiritually in a healthy way.

We must prepare our hearts. Spiritual growth begins with the proper preparation. When a person is building a new deck, they must prepare it for the Texas sun and heat. If they do not apply the proper coating, the wood will begin to warp and splinter in the tough summer conditions. Jesus makes a similar comparison when discussing the parable of the Sower in Matthew 13. He states that the seed will be received and will produce when it falls on "good soil" (Matt. 13:8, 23). Likewise, Proverbs 4 teaches us the importance of guarding and directing our hearts. If we want to grow spiritually, we must begin by developing a heart that is willing to listen to God, accept His instruction, and change according to His will.

We must seek the law of the Lord. After preparing his heart, Ezra sought the law of the Lord. Spiritual growth requires a diligent pursuit of God's word. Faith comes by (is developed by) the word of God (Rom. 10:17). Hebrews 11:6 teaches us that to be pleasing to God, we must believe that He is, and that He rewards those who diligently seek Him (Heb. 11:6). Jesus also taught that if we want to be citizens of the Kingdom, we must seek first His righteousness (Matt. 6:33). Seeking God requires a diligent effort and desire to know and understand what He says.

We must do it. Simply knowing God's word does not produce spiritual growth. Ezra did not stop at seeking the law of the Lord, but he worked to do it as well. God's word must become action in our lives. James addresses this subject in Chapters 1 and 2. One cannot merely hear the word without obedience (Jas. 1:22-27). Faith requires action (Jas. 2:14-26). Jesus is not the author of eternal salvation for those who only know, but for those who obey (Heb. 5:9). The goal of studying is not to know more facts, but to apply the Word so that we can produce better choices, attitudes, relationships, and conduct for the glory of the Father.

We must teach others. Part of doing is helping others grow as well. Ezra sought, learned, did, and taught others how to do the same. Spiritual growth naturally develops a desire to help others grow. Jesus commanded His disciples to make disciples and to teach them to observe all that He had commanded (Matt. 28:19-20). Paul instructed Timothy with a similar responsibility. "Commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:2). God's plan for spiritual growth is a constant process.

Spiritual growth does not come from a quick-fix plan or a miracle pill. Instead, it comes by developing the right focus and habits outlined in Ezra 7:10. It takes time, effort, and hard work. Prepare your heart. Seek God's word. Do it yourself. Teach others the same process. Not only will we grow when we follow this pattern, but we will help restore those in the sick and dying generation.

THE WORLD'S BEST BOOK

Howell Ferguson

The prophecies of the Bible are amazing. Eight hundred years before Jesus was born, the prophet Micah predicted His birth in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2). Then Caesar sent out a decree, as recorded in Luke 2:1, that all the world should be registered. So Mary left Nazareth and went to Bethlehem where she gave birth to Jesus, because her husband Joseph, a descendant of David, had to return to his birthplace for the census. Amazing!

You can turn to Psalm 22, which was written a thousand before the crucifixion of Christ, and find a detailed description of death by crucifixion. This was written before crucifixion was ever even known as a form of execution in Palestine. The Jews did not crucify; they stoned. Yet Psalm 22 records these words, "They pierced My hands and My feet" (22:16). It was prophesied that the soldiers would cast lots for His garments, ten centuries before the actual event (22:18). The Bible prophesied in Zechariah 12:10, "They will look on Me whom they pierced." Of all the wounds that could contribute to death, this one would be unusual. But it happened! The Old Testament description sounds like the writer had been standing at the foot of the cross!

Sunday Sermons

What The Blind See (AM)

Joy Made Full (PM)

Bible Passages To Consider

"And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven"
(Matthew 18:3)

IN NEED OF PRAYER

Danna Smart has been diagnosed with Stage 1 lymphoma of the lymph node. She will meet with her doctors again to determine the next step.

Laura Nagle is in Baptist Desoto Hospital room 803. She continues to make progress following her recent surgery.

Lucy Chamberlain suffered a fall on Sunday which resulted in multiple broken bones in her arm. She will have surgery soon.

Dale Shull was released from the hospital on Wednesday. He is recovering at home.

Rannie Butler, is being moved to room 223 at Senatobia Health and Rehab.

Vern Schrimsher will be receiving IV antibiotics for the next several weeks due to a foot infection. The family has requested no visitors at this time.

Sarah Hechavarria is taking chemotherapy.

Joyce Valentine is on Hospice Care.

James Mason, father of Jennifer Christian, is recovering at home from a recent stay in the hosptial.

Dennis Hawkins, father of Clint & Blake Hawkins, is recovering from recent surgery.

David Chadwick is doing well in his recovery from recent surgery.

Julia Ross, mother of Annette Prater, is in NEA Hospital in Jonesboro. She is not doing well.

Please continue to remember the following: **Erika Stuckey, Jerry Baird, Betty Culbreath, Don Sykes, Meredith Peek, Barbara Day, Alan & Linda Stone, Debbie Shull, Pat Pierce, Beverly Parnell, Jean Jones, Dorothy Butler, Rannie Butler & Karen Oglesby** in your prayers.

BATTLING CANCER

Please remember those who are fighting, or recovering from cancer: **Alan Stone; Pam Eaton; Charlene Farris; Andrew Utz**, great nephew of Peggy Shull; **Varda Cole**, sister in law of Linda Davis; **Don Cheathour**, friend of the Sykes family; **Joe Daly,** online viewer in England; **Houston Hall**, great nephew of Karen Oglesby & Beth Roney; **David Taylor**, neighbors of the Sykes; **Dan Manuel**, friend of Tommy & Peggy Shull; **Heather Butler**, daughter of Lewis Dawson; **Vickie Parker,** sister of Nick Parker; **Kim Butler**, sister in law of Larry Butler; **Lily Jane Jordan**, neighbor's granddaughter of Terry & Brenda Harris; **Oakleigh Free**, great grandaughter of Alan & Linda Stone; **Mandi Singer**, friend of Erica Stuckey; **Mandy Dunbar**, friend of Erica Stuckey; **TJ Holt**, cousin of Amber Wallis; **Margarito Zuniga,** father of former member Alan Zuniga; **Becca Reynolds**, niece of Anita Sanders; **Laura Sowell**, mother of Erin Sowell, **Doreen Harris,** former member, **Glenn Jenkins,** the husband of Bonnie Reid's niece, **Carol Tierce**, sister of Peggy Shull, **Whitley Joy,** great niece of Larry & Elaine Melton & **Kim Blackburn**, neighbor of Nell Parker.

SHUT-INS/ NURSING HOME

Lucy Chamberlain; Debbie Shull; Beverly Parnell; Pam Eaton; Phyllis Smith, The Goldton at Southaven Room #116.

MEN TO SERVE - November 8th, 2026

Preside: Tyrone Willingham

Serve: Christian Kellen, Walter Warren, Jack Etheridge, Jarrett Roberts, John S. Stubblefield, Reed Rister, Jerry Mitchell, Tim Vanderhook

AM Opening Prayer: Larry Everson

AM Closing Prayer: Tommy Kelley

PM Opening Prayer: Larry Cox

PM Closing Prayer: Blake Hawkins

Wed. Opening Prayer: Joel White

Wed. Closing Prayer: Robert Chamberlain

Announcements: Robert Jefferies

Song Leader: Michael Gahagan

Scripture Reading: Dustin Rowe

Security: Jason Griffin

REMINDER:

If you are a song leader, scripture reader, or have opening prayer, you are asked to sit on the front pew when worship begins.

UPCOMING EVENTS

November 18: Gifts for the Children's Home are due. Please place them in the designated box under the bulletin board in the foyer.

FOOD TEAM

Captain: Sheila Simpson

Tabitha Johnson, Annette Prater, Jina Suh, Emily Griffin

HELP IS NEEDED

If you would like to help with Christmas gifts for the Paragould Children's Home, please go to the Fellowship Hall and see the information on the tables and see how you can help. Please see Shelley Selby or Angie Schrimsher for questions.

OUR RECORDS

Bible Study	222
A.M. Worship	270
P.M. Worship	156
P.M. Wed. Worship	165
Contribution	$

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Schedule of Services

Sunday Bible Class..... 9:00 a.m.
Sunday Worship..... 10:00 a.m.
Sunday P.M. Worship..... 1:00 p.m.
Wednesday P.M. Service..... 7:00 p.m.

ELDERS
Gary Barch
Larry Everson
David Rister

DEACONS
Bruce Dunaway
Michael Gahagan
Aaron Gallagher
TJ Johnson
John Stubblefield
Chris Tice
Andy Young

MINISTERS
Robert Jefferies
Josh Walker