



**The Gospel of Mark**  
**Tempted, Tried, and Triumphant**  
**Mark 1:12-13**

**David Sunday      October 14, 2018**



Last week we began a journey through the Gospel of Mark and this morning we'll continue by focusing on Mark 1:12-13. Let's continue in worship now as we hear God's Holy Word:

*<sup>12</sup> The Spirit immediately drove [Jesus] out into the wilderness. <sup>13</sup> And he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. And he was with the wild animals, and the angels were ministering to him.*

Let's pray as we give Him thanks for what He says to us.

Lord Jesus, what a strength You are to us in our weakness. Let us hide ourselves in You. Tempted, tried and sometimes failing, You, our strength, our victory wins. Alleluia, what a Savior! Alleluia, what a Friend! Saving, helping, keeping and loving, You are with us to the end.

Father, we pray that by the power of Your Spirit, You would open our eyes to see more of Jesus today, trusting Him more fully and looking to Him for the strength we need to resist the enemy who seeks to devour us, both from inside and outside. Thank You that we have victory in Jesus, we pray. Amen.

Years ago on the Sunday night CBS news show 60 Minutes, Mike Wallace interviewed a man who had survived Auschwitz. Yehiel De-Nur was a principal witness in the Nuremberg War Crimes back in 1961. During this interview with Mike Wallace, they showed a clip from 1961 of the day when De-Nur walked into the courtroom and saw the face of Adolf Eichmann for the very first time since Auschwitz.

As he saw Eichmann's face, De-Nur became ashen. He started sobbing uncontrollably, then fell and fainted in the courtroom. Mike Wallace asked him, "What was it that caused you to have such a visceral reaction when you saw Adolf Eichmann? Was it hatred? Or fear? Or post-traumatic stress?" De-Nur said, "No. It was none of those things." He said that when he saw Eichmann, he realized immediately that Eichmann was not the god-like army officer that had sent so many people to their deaths. No, Adolf Eichmann was just an ordinary man. De-Nur said, "I

was afraid about myself. I saw that I am capable to do this. I am exactly like him.” Mike Wallace summed up that interview with these words: “Eichmann is in all of us.” That’s sobering!

There’s a traitor lurking within our hearts. There’s an enemy within. We are capable of doing unspeakably evil things. Whenever the tempter comes knocking at the doors of our hearts, there’s a traitor within who is whispering—or sometimes screaming—“Come on in!”

Indwelling sin is this traitor’s name and he never takes a vacation. He’s always there, wearing out his welcome. Wherever we go, whatever we do, this treacherous tenant is lurking within us, ready to sabotage us, hoping to destroy us. One of his favorite tactics is to play dead and deceive us into thinking he’s no longer a powerful presence in our lives. Then, when we’re lulled into a false sense of security, he leaps out of the darkness and seizes us without a fight. That’s the enemy within us.

Then there’s also a tempter outside us—out there in the world—whose name is Satan. In Genesis 3, Satan is portrayed as a cunning serpent. In 1 Peter 5, he’s called a roaring lion, a ravenous lion, seeking to devour someone. In the book of Revelation, in chapter 12, Satan is called a raging red dragon. Jesus Himself believed in the reality of Satan. Jesus did not think Satan was a myth. Jesus said about Satan in John 8:44, *“He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.”*

So we should never underestimate Satan. One of his favorite tricks is to get believers to think he really is not there or that he does not exist. Sometimes he masquerades himself as an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14) or he comes to us like a wolf in sheep’s clothing (Matthew 7:15). He’s cunning and wily, but he wants us to think he’s no real threat, that we can ignore him. The Bible says, “Don’t do that.” The Bible says we need to resist him all our days. Listen to Ephesians 6:10-13:

*<sup>10</sup> Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. <sup>11</sup> Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. <sup>12</sup> For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. <sup>13</sup> Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.*

I think it’s a dangerous mistake to assume that spiritual warfare is something that only happens occasionally in a believer’s life, like it’s an occasional blip on the radar. Instead, it’s more

biblical and more sober-minded to think that I'm engaged in a battle every day of my life. I have an enemy from outside, the devil—and I have an enemy within, indwelling sin. I must not lose my vigilance. I must remain watchful. So don't underestimate Satan.

At the same time, don't overestimate his power. We need to remember that Satan is not all-powerful or all-knowing. He can't be everywhere at once. He's not God. He's far from God. He's one of God's fallen angels and he's under God's authority. He's going to face God's eternal judgment in the lake of fire that burns forever and ever. God is not threatened by Satan. Jesus is not scared of Satan. Jesus dealt the mortal wound to Satan when He died on the cross. He gave him the death blow to the head. I like to think of Satan as having an aneurism in his brain that is growing and growing and one day soon he's going to be destroyed. He's going to die. This is one of the main reasons Jesus Christ came into the world.

Think about this at Christmas time. First John 3:8 says, *"The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil."* If we are united to Christ by faith, we can be sure that Satan's not going to be able to destroy us. Our Savior is going to make us more than conquerors through His love. Or as Paul said to the Romans, *"The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet"* (Romans 16:20).

So we have a traitor within and we have a tempter outside of us, but we do not tremble in fear, because we have a Savior Who was tempted, tried and triumphant. He never failed in the face of temptation. This is what Mark is pointing out in these two verses. There's a lot of detail about Jesus' temptation that Mark leaves out that is recorded in other Gospels. The striking feature of Mark's account is its brevity. Matthew and Luke spend 11 verses and 13 verses on Jesus' temptation, but Mark just gives us two. Still, there's a lot packed into the two verses. There are some unique features in Mark's presentation.

Let's go word by word through these verses to see what Mark tells us about our tempted, tried and triumphant Savior. We're not going to have any outline other than just the words of these two verses, so let's start with the first word.

## **Immediately**

In the Greek text, the first word that catches our attention is the word "immediately." This is a favorite word of Mark. He uses it to convey a sense of urgency. Jesus is a Man on the move. He's a Man of action. He has a mission to accomplish. What happens immediately in Mark 1:12 is not what we would have expected to happen. If you've been tracking with what Mark has told us so far about Who Jesus is, we've seen in verse one that He is the beginning of the gospel. God's doing

a new work through Jesus Christ. Good news is coming through Him. He is the good news. He's Jesus, our Savior. He's Christ, God's anointed Prophet, Priest and King. He's the Son of God.

In verses two and three, we see that the prophets bear witness that this Jesus is the Lord. He is God Himself. Then in 1:4-8 we see that John the Baptist spoke of Jesus as the One Who is mightier than he is, the One Whose straps of His sandals John the Baptist felt unworthy to untie. John said Jesus is better than him, greater than him in every way. John's baptism is an external, symbolic baptism of repentance, a cleansing with water. But Jesus' baptism transforms us from deep within, for He is the One Who baptizes us with His Holy Spirit.

Finally, in 1:9-11, God Himself tells us Who Jesus is. When Jesus comes up out of the waters of baptism, Mark uses a unique word. He says the heavens were "torn open," reminding us of Isaiah's prayer in Isaiah 64:1, "*Oh that you would rend the heavens and come down.*" As the heavens are torn open, the Spirit of God descends on Jesus, coming in bodily form like a dove, filling and empowering Jesus for His mission. Then a voice thunders from heaven, God the Father saying to His Son, "You are My beloved Son. I love You and I am well pleased with You."

So what would you expect to happen immediately after all this? I'm looking for angels to appear in the skies, joining the Father in praise and acclamation of the Son. I'm looking for celebration at this point. I'm looking for a coronation. But that's not what happens. Not yet. Mark is going to hold off telling us about Jesus' exaltation until after He goes through the cross. There's a cross that comes before the crown.

Right after His baptism, Mark lets us know there was no time to linger there; not time to bask in the glory of it all. There was no time for Jesus to catch His breath. And it can be like that in the Christian's life as well. Seasons of high communion with God are often followed by sharp trials, just as Jesus experienced. What does Mark say "immediately" happens next (verse 12)?

### **The Spirit drove Him out**

We're seeing the Trinitarian actions of God here brilliantly. The Father has acclaimed His beloved Son. In His baptism, the Son has submitted to His role as the One Who will identify with us as our Mediator between God and man. The Spirit has descended into Jesus, filling and empowering Him for His mission. Now that same Spirit drives Him out.

The word there for "drives him out" is a forceful word. It's the same word that's used when Jesus casts out demons. It's not merely saying the Spirit led Jesus. The Spirit didn't whisper into Jesus' ear. No, the Spirit thrust Him, impelled Him. It's not that Jesus was being acted upon against His will. No. Mark is simply emphasizing the seriousness of the coming conflict.

To illustrate this, imagine you're watching the President of the United States giving a speech somewhere, then suddenly, immediately, in the middle of his speech, a whole of swarm of Secret Service agents surround him and thrust him out of the room. What would you think if you saw that happen? You'd think something very serious must be happening right now.

That's what Mark is wanting us to see. He wants us to see that Jesus' battle against the powers of darkness has begun. It starts in a very desolate, God-forsaken place. Look at the next words in verse 12.

### **Into the wilderness**

This is an important theme for Mark: the wilderness. There's so much symbolism in that image. For instance, James Edwards says this: "The imagery of the wilderness is reminiscent of the scapegoat who was loaded down with the sins of Israel." On the Day of Atonement, the priest would confess the sins of the people and lay his hands on the head of the goat, then that goat would be expelled into the wilderness to carry away the sin and guilt of the people, never to be seen again. Edwards is saying that's what we should be seeing here. Jesus has identified with us in His baptism. He said, "Whatever it takes to deal with the sins of My people, I'm all in. Nothing is going to stop Me from going all the way to the cross. I will fully identify with them."

Now we see the Spirit driving Him into the wilderness like the scapegoat. He's isolated. He's away from the presence of any human being. He's not driven into a city or to a public arena, but into a wilderness, a desert, about which Chrysostom, one of the early church preachers, said, "In this desolate place, the Spirit extended the devil an occasion to test him, not only by hunger, but also by loneliness, for it is there most especially that the devil assails us, when he sees us left alone and by ourselves."

When you're isolated, when you're cut off from the fellowship of God's people, you are more vulnerable to temptation's power. Jesus was all alone, without a friend, without food or drink. He didn't have any provisions to carry with Him on His journey. He would need to depend fully on the Spirit Who's driven Him to this wilderness. He's going to have to demonstrate that He believes what God said in Deuteronomy 8:3: "*Man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.*" He's going to have to trust God in the wilderness to meet His needs. Then we read this at the beginning of verse 13.

## **And he was in the wilderness forty days**

Now, “forty days” is an echo from the Old Testament. Think of Moses, the leader of God’s people, on Mt. Sinai in the presence of the Lord, where he received the covenant of the law. How long was he up there? Forty days.

Or think of Elijah and his flight from Jezebel. How long did he spend out in the desert? We read in 1 Kings 19:5-7 that an angel of the Lord came to him twice, taking him food and drink to sustain him. Then it says in verse eight, “*And Elijah arose and ate and drank, and went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb, the mount of God.*”

Here in Mark we’re seeing One greater than Moses, greater than Elijah. But most of all, we should think of Israel, wandering in the wilderness for how long? Forty years. In each instance in the wilderness, whether it’s Moses, Elijah or the Israelites, that wilderness became a proving ground. It became a place where their faithfulness would be tested. Would they trust God? Would they follow Him as He led them? Would they wait for His provision? Would they let Him guide them all the way to the Promised Land?

So the wilderness is a place of testing and a place of the promise of deliverance. In His baptism and in His temptation, Mark is showing us that Jesus represents Israel reduced to one Person. The question we have is this: where Israel failed miserably in the wilderness, is there a Savior Who can triumph? Will Jesus triumph where Israel failed?

The next words we read in verse 13 are these:

## **Being tempted by Satan**

It’s very interesting that Mark doesn’t go into the specifics of the temptations. If you read Matthew and Luke, you’ll see that Jesus was tempted precisely in the same ways Israel was tempted in the wilderness. In the ways they failed, Jesus was tempted. But Mark doesn’t take us there. Instead, Mark wants us to focus on the tenure of the temptation, the length of the temptation, the tenacity of the temptation. Mark wants us to see this went on for 40 days out there in the wilderness.

In the Gospel of Mark, this testing of Jesus by the enemy doesn’t end when Jesus leaves the wilderness. His whole ministry becomes a frontal assault on the kingdom of darkness. Even in Mark 1, Jesus is going to be going on the offensive against Satan’s kingdom. His whole ministry is going to be like this, all the way to the cross.

Friends, if you think about Jesus being tempted by Satan, realize how humiliating that was for our Savior. Think of it like this. Imagine yourself shut in in a solitary confinement cell in the

Illinois state prison with one of the vilest and most degraded criminals in our state. Now, he has no gun or weapon to kill you, and there's a guard outside making sure he can't take your life. But for 40 days and nights, you have to endure the torment of being with this criminal. His whole conversation is an attempt to tamper with your allegiance to Christ, to undermine your convictions, to pollute your mind, to infuse blasphemous, perverted thoughts, to wound your conscience, to destroy your peace.

Can you imagine how intense that kind of suffering would be? Can you imagine the grief and torture your soul would endure in those 40 days? Could any of us stand it? I couldn't. Yet we are sinners ourselves. We have a lot more in common with that criminal, actually, than we do with Jesus. For us to be tempted involves no special humiliation. We're already humiliated by the presence of sin in our lives. But this was quite different in the case of Jesus. Jesus was the holy, undefiled, sinless Son of God. As a man, He humbled Himself to such an extent to endure 40 days and 40 nights of the most vile and fearful assaults from the devil himself. That was an awful, humiliating place for our Savior to be.

Just think of the difference between Jesus' temptation and Adam's and Eve's temptation in the garden. They were in a garden paradise. They had plenty of fresh food, newly created fruits and vegetables of all kinds to satisfy them. Their stomachs were full. They had companionship. They were in love. They had great relationships with one another and with God. They walked with Him in the cool of the day in that garden. Right there in the midst of that garden paradise, Adam and Eve caved at just one temptation.

Here's our Savior, not in a garden, but in a desolate wilderness. Not full, but fasting for 40 days—ravaged with hunger. He had no friends there. All He had to live on was the Word of God. And the onslaught of Satan's temptations was relentless. For 40 days and 40 nights, He was being tempted by the devil—and He stands. He prevails.

There's something else about this that Mark points out that neither Matthew nor Luke tell us about. It's in verse 13.

### **And He was with the wild animals**

As if the devil weren't enough! Mark is the only Gospel writer who mentions this. Just imagine serpents hissing near His feet, hyenas wailing in the middle of the night, lions drawing near and roaring in His presence. This was not a garden paradise. Think of Daniel in the lions' den. Here's Jesus. He's facing every spiritual and physical danger we can face in this fallen, broken and sinful, disintegrating world. He's doing it all to win a people for Himself so that one

day soon we can live forever with Him in a new creation. Isaiah describes the new creation like this, beginning in Isaiah 11:6. He says, “This is what it’s going to be like one day.”

*The wolf shall dwell with the lamb,  
and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat,  
and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together;  
and a little child shall lead them.*

You can say to your five-year-old, “Do you want to go out and play with the lion today? Go on, take your lion for a walk.” Verse seven, “*The cow and the bear shall graze.*” Bears and cows do not go together right now. “*Their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.*” This next picture doesn’t sound very attractive to me, but it probably will be in the new creation. “*The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder’s den.*” Here’s the point: “*They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.*”

Creation is going to be at peace again. The brutality of the wild kingdom of animals is no longer going to haunt or torment or threaten us. But that time has not yet come and that’s not what it was like out there in the wilderness. Jesus was experiencing and hearing all those fearful threats, but He was not harmed by them because of what Mark tells us next.

### **The angels were ministering to Him**

Mark was writing these words to Christians in Rome. We don’t know if it was the time of Nero or sometime before Nero. We can’t be sure. But there was coming a day when those who were reading Mark’s Gospel were going to face the most brutal persecution. Some of them were going to be thrown to the wild beasts to be torn and devoured in front of cheering spectators in the Coliseum.

There was no event that was more likely to invite that kind of persecution than baptism. When you declared publicly, “Jesus is my Lord and King,” the Roman government saw that as a threat to the authority of the emperor. Some Christians were taken straight from the waters of their baptism to the Coliseum with the wild beasts, where they were devoured in public.

Mark is telling them here, “Your Savior has gone before you. He knows what you’re going through. He will be with you. His angels will minister to you. And if this trial results in your death, He will meet you on the other side, where there will be nothing more to harm or destroy you.”

There's a place in the Bible where wild beasts and ministering angels are mentioned in the same context. Let's turn to Psalm 91. This is a psalm that speaks of one who "*dwells in the shelter of the Most High...*" and who "*abides in the shadow of the Almighty.*" This is speaking of the person who says to the Lord, "*You are my refuge and my fortress, my God in whom I trust.*" I want us to pick up at verse nine to see what God says to the person who trusts in Him in the midst of the desolate wilderness, in the midst of warfare and battle. This is what God speaks to the person who trusts in Him when you're surrounded by enemies.

- <sup>9</sup> *Because you have made the Lord your dwelling place—  
the Most High, who is my refuge—*  
<sup>10</sup> *no evil shall be allowed to befall you,  
no plague come near your tent.*  
<sup>11</sup> *For he will command his angels concerning you  
to guard you in all your ways.*  
<sup>12</sup> *On their hands they will bear you up,  
lest you strike your foot against a stone.*  
<sup>13</sup> *You will tread on the lion and the adder;  
the young lion and the serpent you will trample underfoot.*

That sounds to me a whole lot like what happened to Jesus in the wilderness. The sun was blazing, but Jesus was dwelling in the shelter of the Most High God. He was abiding under the shadow of the Almighty. The enemy was assaulting Him, but Jesus was running to His Father for refuge. He was saying, "A mighty fortress is My God." We get a glimpse of how Jesus prevailed over the tempter's power at the end of Psalm 91. We know from Matthew and Luke that Jesus fought against the tempter's assaults with the Word of God. But I believe Psalm 91 gives us a little insight into what was happening inside Jesus' heart, what enabled Him to resist the devil for 40 days and nights in this desolate wilderness with the wild beasts. Look at verse 14:

- <sup>14</sup> *Because he holds fast to me in love, I will deliver him;  
I will protect him, because he knows my name.*  
<sup>15</sup> *When he calls to me, I will answer him;  
I will be with him in trouble;  
I will rescue him and honor him.*  
<sup>16</sup> *With long life I will satisfy him  
and show him my salvation.*

That's what Jesus was doing in the wilderness. He was holding fast to His Father in love. He was calling to Him day and night: "My God, My refuge, My fortress, I trust in You. Deliver Me

from the power of the enemy.” That’s what fortified His heart to resist the devil. He held fast in love.

I know some people think, “Jesus can’t really understand what it’s like to be tempted, because He’s not a sinner. He never sinned.; I’ve sinned. I know what temptation is like.” I want to answer that confusion in two ways. First, from C.S. Lewis:

The silly idea is current that good people do not know what temptation means. This is an obvious lie. Only those who try to resist temptation know how strong it is... A man who gives in to temptation after five minutes simply does not know what it would have been like an hour later. That is why bad people, in one sense, know very little about badness. They have lived a sheltered life by always giving in... Christ, because He was the only man Who never yielded to temptation, is also the only man Who knows to the full what temptation means—the only complete realist.

Jesus faced the full onslaught and never gave in. He’s able to sympathize with us when we’re tempted, because He Himself was tempted in every way as we are, yet without sin. That’s the first answer to that confusion.

Then there’s something Jason Myer reminded me of in the book Instruments in the Redeemer’s Hands. Just imagine a strong man at a carnival or fair, bending iron bars with his strength. The first bar they bring him is thin and weak; bends it to a 90-degree angle and then snaps it in half. But then they bring him another bar that’s much thicker, much stronger. Even though the strong man exerts all his strength, it bends until the ends touch, but it never breaks. Which bar endured more pressure? The second. That bar absorbed the full force of the man’s strength but did not break. Paul Tripp, the author of that book, says when Jesus was on earth, He was like that second bar:

Because He never gave in, because He did not run away, because He never went where temptation would lead, but stood strong until that moment of temptation was over, He endured the full power of temptation. Christ endured stress, pain, suffering, sacrifice of an intensity that we will never face because he did not break. He stood against sin for us. He endured everything the world could throw against Him.

I want everyone to know that if you follow Jesus, you’re not going to be exempt from temptation. In fact, following Jesus is probably going to lead you into more temptation. The devil will go after you if you’re a follower of Jesus. Following Jesus will mean going into wilderness

times. You're going to be assailed by doubts, fears, blasphemous thoughts, wicked imaginations and you don't know where they're coming from. They are fiery darts from the evil one. The enemy wants to devour you and following Jesus will include those fierce onslaughts.

One of the Puritans said, "Christ was made like unto us, that He might be tempted; and we are tempted, that we might be made like unto Christ." See, it's not a sin to be tempted. We need to understand this. When we're assailed by thoughts and are thinking, "Where did that come from?" we need to understand there's a real enemy. Martin Luther said, "Thoughts are like birds. You can't keep them from flying over your head, but you can keep them from making a nest in your hair."

It's what you do with temptations that's important. You take them captive. You make them obedient to Christ. Too many believers get so distracted and discouraged by the temptation. They feel like they're sinning, just because they're being tempted. No. Jesus Himself was tempted. It's not a sin to be tempted—it's a sin to give in. It's a sin to fail to resist. When you get really serious about following Jesus, you will experience more powerful temptations, not less.

I could give you a list of practical steps that will help you. Memorizing Scripture. Getting accountability partners. Lots of things you could do to resist temptation. But I think Mark is pointing us to something deeper here, something more potent, something more life-transforming, something more sustainable. He's not pointing us to something—he's pointing us to Someone. He's saying, "Look to Jesus. See how He triumphed. See how He conquered and realize that you are united to Him. His strength can become your strength." The key to resisting temptation is not a technique—it's a heart attitude of love toward your Savior. "*Because he holds fast to me in love,*" the psalm says, "*I will deliver him.*"

So when we fear, our faith will fail. It's Christ Who will hold us fast. When the tempter would prevail, Mark wants us to know that He will hold us fast. We cannot keep our hope through life's fearful path. Our love is often cold. Christ must hold us fast. It's love for Him—holding fast to Him in love—that gives us power to resist. But there's something even deeper than that. We love because He first loved us (1 John 4:19). It's knowing how much He loves us.

I have found that when I'm most aware of God's love in my life, I am least attracted to sin and temptation. When I am basking and resting and rejoicing in a fresh awareness of God's love for me, sin is much less attractive. What does Mark tell us about Jesus' temptation? Not a lot of things, but he tells us this in verse 11: "*And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.'*" Then immediately, the Spirit led Him into the wilderness.

Do you think that through those 40 days and nights of fierce temptation, Jesus ever forgot how much His Father loved Him? I think that voice was ringing in His heart and ears throughout

those 40 days. I believe one of the reasons we fall into chronic habits of failure is because that voice has gotten drowned out and we're not thinking about the Father's love for us. No, we're thinking the Father is a bully. We're thinking He's an angry, disappointed parent ready to yell at us. We're thinking, "He's left me to fend for myself, like an orphan."

Friend, if you fear that God might slam the door in your face or kick you out on the streets because you've failed too many times, then all it takes is a whisper from the tempter and you're defeated. If you don't know and believe and rest and rejoice daily in how much your Father loves you, you're defeated before temptation even comes your way. Because you are identified with Jesus, if you keep hearing His voice of love, the same thing the Father said to Jesus at His baptism He now says to you. If you believe that, you will be stronger to resist in the knowledge of that love.

So believer in Jesus, I want you to hear the Father's voice. If you're not a believer yet, I want you to know that if you put your trust in Jesus, this is what God the Father will be saying to you. Hear what the Father says to us. He says, "You are My beloved son. You are My beloved daughter. You're clothed in the righteousness of Christ. I forgive you. I love you. I'm not giving up on you. I'll never reject you. I delight in you. I rejoice over you with singing." The fuller and the fresher your experience of God's love for you is, the firmer your resistance to temptation will be.

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