

Human Temptations

Marcus H. Martins, Ph.D.



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One of the Apostle Paul's best-known teachings is about temptations:

“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry ... Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.”
(1 Corinthians 10:13-14, 12)

By declaring that “temptation [is] common to man,” Paul reminds us that, by nature, a mortal and imperfect human body has desires, appetites, and passions—physical, mental, and emotional. The “idolatry” mentioned by Paul is defined in dictionaries as “blind love or exaggerated admiration; immoderate attachment or devotion to something” (see President Spencer W. Kimball, [“The False Gods We Worship,”](#) Ensign, June 1976).

Following this line of thought, the Apostle James added an important detail: *“But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.”* (James 1:14)

Our loving Heavenly Father has given us eternal laws, commandments (some impermanent), and his prophets have taught us standards that help us satisfy these body cravings in wise and just ways according to the customs of our times. When we make covenants with the Lord through sacred ordinances, we commit ourselves to obey divine laws and commandments. And the standards set by prophets help us be obedient.

By means of “negative inspirations” the adversary “entices” us (i.e., cunningly urges) to satisfy the natural desires, appetites, and passions of the human body in ways contrary to the divine laws and commandments. We may say that what we call “temptations” are not our body cravings per se, but rather those “negative inspirations” used by the adversary to lead us into disobedience.

What our current prophet, President Russell M. Nelson, calls the “Covenant Path” is nothing more than the “strait gate and narrow way” taught by the Savior Jesus Christ (Matthew 7:14), who also promised that “... the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” (John 14:26)

We may say that the covenants we make with the Lord act as a hedge (or “guardrail”) to remind us daily of the width of this narrow way, and if we live in ways that allow us to

perceive the ever-present guidance of the Holy Ghost, his influence will act as a “proximity sensor” to alert us if we are approaching the banks of the narrow path.

We may say that these two—sacred covenants and the influence of the Holy Ghost—constitute is our “way to escape”, until the day when we will be admitted into the divine presence.

Dr. Marcus H. Martins is a professor of religion and leadership and former dean at Brigham Young University-Hawaii, and has served as a translator, temple officiator, high councilor, bishop, and mission president. These remarks do not constitute an official statement of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

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