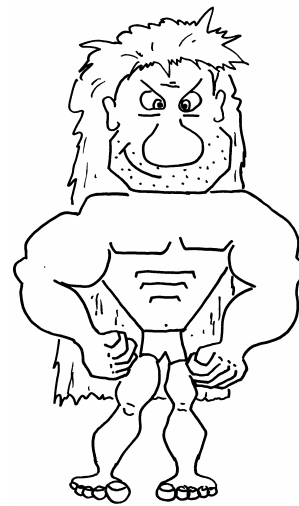


## Overcoming Temptation and Securing your Freedom

*(Judges 15:1-5 NKJV) “After a while, in the time of wheat harvest, it happened that Samson visited his wife with a young goat. And he said, “Let me go in to my wife, into her room.” But her father would not permit him to go in. {2} Her father said, “I really thought that you thoroughly hated her; therefore I gave her to your companion. Is not her younger sister better than she? Please, take her instead.” {3} And Samson said to them, “This time I shall be blameless regarding the Philistines if I harm them!” {4} Then Samson went and caught three hundred foxes; and he took torches, turned the foxes tail to tail, and put a torch between each pair of tails. {5} When he had set the torches on fire, he let the foxes go into the standing grain of the Philistines, and burned up both the shocks and the standing grain, as well as the vineyards and olive groves.”*



**Samson**

There is purpose behind the thing that tempts you. It has a demonic assignment to bind and afflict you. It is determined to take you off the path of your own purpose and stop you in your tracks! It wants to redirect you to a path of destruction.

*(Proverbs 16:18 NKJV) “Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before a fall.”*

Temptations may seem beautiful and worth embracing, but if you touch them they will seize you in a grip of trial, tribulation and trouble. Pride can convince us that we are beyond temptation's grasp, but temptation feeds on pride.

- We look at temptations as something optional.
- There is nothing optional about temptations. They want to capture you and render you powerless, so they can execute their hatred upon you.

Delilah made no secret about her true intent. Her temptation of Samson was an unconcealed enticement. She presented it like a gift, dangled in front of Samson's nose. Samson knew in his heart what he was playing with, as do we all. Nothing is hidden that will not be revealed. There was no deception in the enticement!

Delilah was perfectly clear. **The only deception was Samson's self-deception in his opinion of himself.** It is a fool, who fools himself!

*(Proverbs 14:8 NKJV) "The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way, But the folly of fools is deceit."*

**1.** *(Judges 16:6-15 NKJV) "So Delilah said to Samson, "Please tell me where your great strength lies, and with what you may be bound to afflict you." {7} And Samson said to her, "If they bind me with seven fresh bowstrings, not yet dried, then I shall become weak, and be like any other man." {8} So the lords of the Philistines brought up to her seven fresh bowstrings, not yet dried, and she bound him with them. {9} Now men were lying in wait, staying with her in the room. And she said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" But he broke the bowstrings as a strand of yarn breaks when it touches fire. So the secret of his strength was not known.*

**2.** *{10} Then Delilah said to Samson, "Look, you have mocked me and told me lies. Now, please tell me what you may be bound with." {11} So he said to her, "If they bind me securely with new ropes that have never been used, then I shall become weak, and be like any other man." {12} Therefore Delilah took new ropes and bound him with them, and said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" And men were lying in wait, staying in the room. But he broke them off his arms like a thread.*

**3.** *{13} Delilah said to Samson, "Until now you have mocked me and told me lies. Tell me what you may be bound with." And he said to her, "If you weave the seven locks of my head into the web of the loom"; {14} So she wove it tightly with the batten of the loom, and said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson"" But he awoke from his sleep, and pulled out the batten and the web from the loom. {15} Then she said to him, "How can you say, 'I love you,' when your heart is not with me? You have mocked me these three times, and have not told me where your great strength lies.""*

Do not think you can escape a temptation by thinking lightly of it. You will only feed your pride and invite it to pursue you until it captures you. It will remain on its demonic assignment as long as you give it room to operate in your life. If you will continue in your deception of yourself, it will pursue until it gets you positioned for destruction.



## Why do we typically deceive ourselves, toying with temptation until we have set ourselves up for the fall?

The answer is always found in our sinful feelings of self-sufficiency, pride, a sense of superiority or invincibility and disregard for the outcomes and consequences. We become like this because we have allowed temptation to devalue the fear of the Lord! No fear of God is a setup for a great fall.

### **There are No Discounts with Temptation.**

You pay full price.

Three times Delilah transparently tried to get Samson to reveal his secret. Each time, he failed to take her seriously (as we often do with temptation). He underestimated the source of the enticement. He discounted its price on his life. To discount means to lower the worth of something - to cheapen it. Samson underestimated the source of the enticement, which led to a false assessment of the price of the enticement. It would cost him everything.

In verses 10 and 13, Samson not only discounted the threat, but he greatly underestimated her persistence. The attack was fully engaged. It would persist as long as it was not countered with serious biblical means.

- Your temptations are after you and will hound you with unending persistence. Do not underestimate the persistence of your adversary. He is like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

*(1 Peter 5:8 NKJV) “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.”*

- However, if you are fully submitted to Christ, do not fear. Do not underestimate the power of the greater One in you. And so set himself up for the fall. He trusted in himself and left God out of the loop!

**4.** *(Judges 16:16-21 NKJV) “And it came to pass, when she pestered him daily with her words and pressed him, so that his soul was vexed to death, {17} that he told her all his heart, and said to her, “No razor has ever come upon my head, for I have been a Nazirite to God from my mother’s womb. If I am shaven,*

*then my strength will leave me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man.” {18} When Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying, “Come up once more, for he has told me all his heart.” So the lords of the Philistines came up to her and brought the money in their hand. {19} Then she lulled him to sleep on her knees, and called for a man and had him shave off the seven locks of his head. Then she began to torment him, and his strength left him. {20} And she said, “The Philistines are upon you, Samson!” So he awoke from his sleep, and said, “I will go out as before, at other times, and shake myself free!” But he did not know that the LORD had departed from him. {21} Then the Philistines took him and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza. They bound him with bronze fetters, and he became a grinder in the prison.”*

*(Judges 16:16 GWT) “Every day she made his life miserable with her questions. She pestered him until he wished he were dead.”*

Samson finds himself captured and without strength. He was first blinded to the temptation by his own pride and foolishness. Then, he was blinded physically by the hands of others. He will now travel a road not welcomed or expected.

### **The Process of Temptation**

*(James 1:12-17 NKJV) “Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. {13} Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. {14} But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. {15} Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death. {16} Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. {17} Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.”*

**The Process that brings Destruction: VERSES 14 & 15**

**TEMPTATION → ENTICEMENT → SIN → DEATH**

A temptation always promises you something, or you would not find the enticement worth embracing.

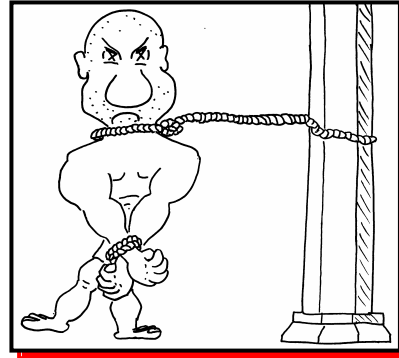


## What is beneath every sinful promise?

Beneath it is a promise to make you feel good for the moment. The lie is that the momentary feelings are worth the inevitable consequences. When you accept the temptation, in your heart, you always know it is a lie! You decide to fool yourself.

Again - **The only deception was Samson's self-deception in his opinion of himself.** It is a fool, who fools himself!

For Samson, it was too late. He found himself bound, powerless and mocked by his enemies. His potential was destroyed. His destiny would no longer be realized. He was a failure - a man who missed his calling, lost his reputation, and forfeited his future.



*(Judges 16:22-30 NKJV) "However, the hair of his head began to grow again after it had been shaven. {23} Now the lords of the Philistines gathered together to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon their god, and to rejoice. And they said: "Our god has delivered into our hands Samson our enemy!" {24} When the people saw him, they praised their god; for they said: "Our god has delivered into our hands our enemy, The destroyer of our land, And the one who multiplied our dead." {25} So it happened, when their hearts were merry, that they said, "Call for Samson, that he may perform for us." So they called for Samson from the prison, and he performed for them. And they stationed him between the pillars. {26} Then Samson said to the lad who held him by the hand, "Let me feel the pillars which support the temple, so that I can lean on them." {27} Now the temple was full of men and women. All the lords of the Philistines were there; about three thousand men and women on the roof watching while Samson performed. {28} Then Samson called to the LORD, saying, "O Lord GOD, remember me, I pray! Strengthen me, I pray, just this once, O God, that I may with one blow take vengeance on the Philistines for my two eyes!" {29} And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars which supported the temple, and he braced himself against them, one on his right and the other on his left. {30} Then Samson said, "Let me die with the Philistines!" And he pushed with all his might, and the temple fell on the lords and all the people who were in it. So the dead that he killed at his death were more than he had killed in his life."*

3 It was a tragic ending to Samson's temptation. The justice he received did nothing to lessen the impact of the temptation on his life. He never fulfilled his destiny. Who knows how many would have been touched with God's grace, had he been walking in the fear of the Lord?

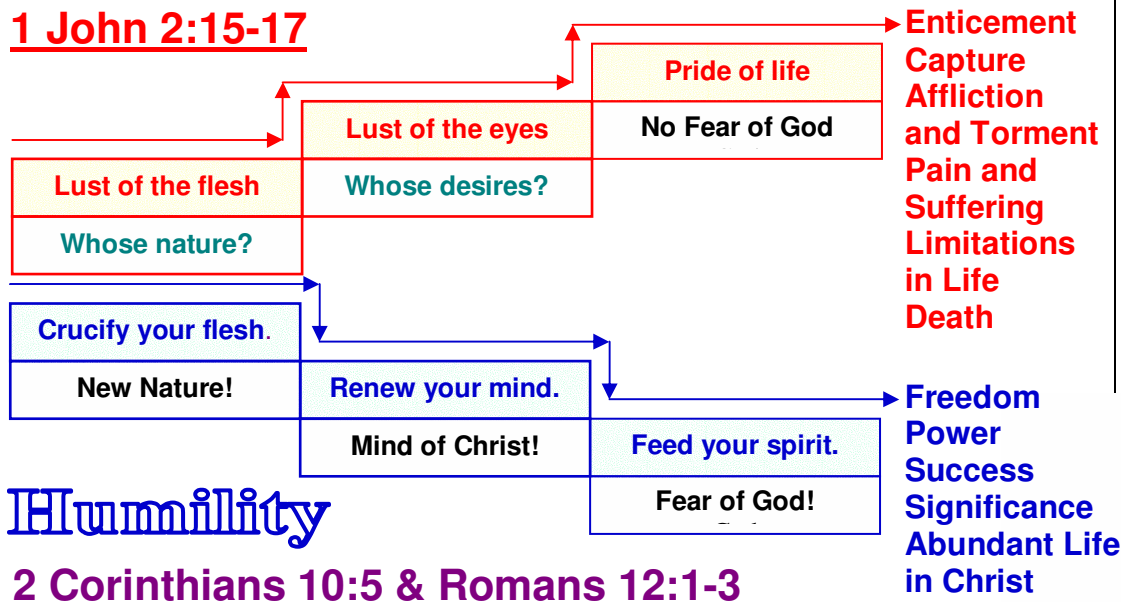
**The Good News: There is a way of escape. Take it while you can! Position yourself for victory and rest in God.**

*(1 Corinthians 10:12-13 NKJV) "Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. {13} No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it."*

**Look at the Entire Picture (both Processes)**

**Arrogance!**

**1 John 2:15-17**



**Humility**

**2 Corinthians 10:5 & Romans 12:1-3**

**There are two choices found in every temptation.**

**First Choice: Three Prideful Steps Up to Misery**

Lust of the flesh → Lust of the eyes → Pride of life  
*Whose nature?      Whose desires      No fear of God*

Leading to: Enticement, Capture, Affliction and torment, Pain and suffering, Limitations in life... ultimately - death.



## Second Choice: Three Humble Steps Down

Crucify your flesh → Renew your mind → Feed your spirit  
*New nature*                      *Mind of Christ*                      *Fear of God*

Leading to: An Abundant, Joyful Life in Christ.

Notice the direction of the steps in each case: You can climb up, or you can lower yourself before the Lord and let Him lift you up.

**The Bottom Line: Arrogance and Death, or Life and Humility?**

*(James 4:7-10 NKJV) "Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. {8} Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. {9} Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. {10} Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up."*

There was a story told by James Wells in 1882. It was told to teach us about the wisdom found in humility. It was to help us understand the position in Christ we can gain from putting into action the following verse.

*(Psalms 119:105 NKJV) "Your word is a lamp to my feet  
 And a light to my path."*

Here is the story:

"A man tells that when he was a boy he was proud to carry the lantern for his Sabbath school teacher. Their way to school led through unlit, muddy streets. The boy held the lantern far too high, and both sank in the mud. "Ah! You must hold the lamp lower," the teacher exclaimed, as they gained a firm footing on the farther side of the slough. The teacher then beautifully explained our text, and the man declares that he never forgot the lesson that night. **You may easily hold the lamp too high; but you can hardly hold it too low.**" (James Wells - 1882)

**Lesson of the Story:**  
**The position of victory is on your face before God!**

***(Psalms 112:1-4 NKJV) “Praise the LORD! Blessed is the man who fears the LORD, Who delights greatly in His commandments. {2} His descendants will be mighty on earth; The generation of the upright will be blessed. {3} Wealth and riches will be in his house, And his righteousness endures forever. {4} Unto the upright there arises light in the darkness; He is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous.”***

*God bless you as you walk in uncompromising victory in Christ.*

*Dr. Bob Abramson*