

Doctrine of Tempting

1. The concept of God tempting someone to sin is foreign to *Scripture*.
 - *James 1:13 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: 14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.*

2. However, God does tempt individuals in the sense of testing them as God tested Abraham's faith for the purpose of approval. The Hebrew word used in Genesis 22:1 to set forth this spiritual truth is *nacah* (*naw-saw*); and means, "to test".
 - *Genesis 22:1 And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am.*

3. While God cannot tempt anyone to do evil it is possible for individuals to tempt God. The Exodus Generation tested God in an inappropriate manner through demanding anger. Though God was going to meet the daily needs of His people, spiritual dynamics changed when the people insisted God meet their time schedule in performing a miracle or giving them provisions needed.
 - *Exodus 17:2 Wherefore the people did chide with Moses, and said, Give us water that we may drink. And Moses said unto them, Why chide ye with me? Wherefore do ye tempt the LORD?*

4. In the act of testing, God has promised He will never allow any person to be tested beyond what is endurable.
 - *1 Corinthians 10:13 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. 14 Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry.*

5. The concept of tempting or testing God for the purpose of approval is forbidden in *Scripture*. Gideon's act of putting out a fleece is an example that should not be emulated in unbelief, cynicism or anger.
 - *Deuteronomy 6:16 Ye shall not tempt the LORD your God, as ye tempted him in Massah.*
 - *Matthew 4:7 Jesus said unto him [Satan], It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.*

6. Sometimes the Lord invites testing. In such cases it is wrong not to prove Him. King Ahaz did not show faith or spiritual maturity when He said, "I will not ask, neither will I tempt the Lord" for Ahaz had been instructed to ask for a sign.
 - *Isaiah 7:12 But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I tempt the LORD.*

7. Some people dare God to punish them by breaking His laws.
 - *Malachi 3:15 And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered.*

8. As people tempt God the Father, so individuals dare to tempt God the Son. When this is done there is a well-deserved rebuke waiting.
 - *Matthew 22:18 But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?*
 - *1 Corinthians 10:9 Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.*

9. While it is wrong to tempt God the Son, His temptations did serve to enable Him to identify with those who are tempted in order to comfort them.
 - *Hebrews 2:18 For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.*
 - *Hebrews 4:15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*

10. As God the Father and God the Son can and were tempted, so an assault can be, and has been made against God the Holy Spirit.
 - *Acts 5:9 Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out.*

11. The various ways God is tempted or tested should again be noted.
 - God can be tempted by demanding inappropriate lust patterns be satisfied. *Psalms 78:18 And they tempted God in their heart by asking meat for their lust.*
 - ❖ There is approbation lust whereby a person's pride has to be satisfied.
 - ❖ There is sexual lust. Sexual lust patterns include, but are not limited to, homosexuality, lesbianism, bestiality, adultery, and mental fornication.
 - ❖ There is material lust. An inordinate love of money and material objects is called covetousness, and that in turn is declared to be idolatry (Colossians 3:5).
 - God can be tempted or tested by inappropriate and demanding anger.

- God can be tested by openly violating His laws and daring Him to move against the sinner.
 - God can be tested by pretending to be more spiritual and more generous than is warranted.
 - God can be tested by legalistic rules and regulations being superimposed upon His people. *Acts 15:10 Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?*
12. As the Lord should not be tempted neither should His followers tempt one another. The principle of not putting temptation in the way of another person is considered by the case of the marital covenant and responsibilities.
- *1 Corinthians 7:5 Defraud ye not [do not withhold the act of marriage] one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.*
13. If a person is tempted and falls into sin, those who are more spiritual should engage in the ministry of reconciliation and restoration, not condemnation and isolation, unless there is no positive response to love's appeal.
- *Galatians 6:1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.*
14. There are terrible spiritual repercussions when God is tempted.
- The power of God is limited. *Psalms 78:41 Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel.*
 - The soul is left without spiritual strength or maturity. *Psalms 106:14 But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert. 15 And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul.*
 - Shallow thinking is expressed leading to personal embarrassment. *Luke 10:25 And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? 26 He said unto him, What is written in the law? How readest thou? 27 And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. 28 And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live. 29 But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?*
 - A premature sin unto death may result. *1 Corinthians 10:9 Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.*

- Spiritual fruit may dry up and any potential root of righteousness may be destroyed. *1 Thessalonians 3:4 For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know. 5 For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain.*