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I Corinthians 10:13

13. “No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.”

In considering this verse we must first stress the fact that the two statements of fact and two promises contained within this verse of Scripture apply specifically to Christians, those who are the adopted children of God by covenant. Anyone outside of Christ cannot experience or claim this verse for their lives.

The first statement of fact reads, “No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man.” In other words, any thing you are tempted by is not new or unique. Any temptation you receive, Jesus and the Holy Spirit have already faced and overcome in the flesh. Hebrews 4:15 says of Jesus, “For we do not have a high priest who can not sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.” So Christian, the Holy Spirit dwelling within you has experience with every possible temptation you will face.

Next, I Corinthians 10:13 states that “God is

faithful.” In other words, what God says He will do, He will always do. Two places in Scripture we are told “God can not lie.” Also the fact is given that “the Scripture can not be broken.” Upon that foundation and assurance, God’s word gives the following two promises.

First the Scripture states that God “will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able.” In other words, God, who has experienced any and all temptation in the body of Jesus Christ, and whose Spirit lives in the Christian and knows your weaknesses and abilities even better than you do, promises to filter out all temptations which you are not strong enough to handle at any given time. In other words, any temptation which a Christian faces, God knows you are strong enough to overcome it and not sin. Isn’t that incredibly good news!

Then God gives us a second promise, “But with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.” So not only does God keep temptations that we can not handle victoriously away from us, but He also provides a way of escape for any temptation that we do confront. It is our responsibility, then, to look for the way of escape whenever we are tempted and take God’s way of escape that is provided. And so turn away from sin.

A couple of weeks ago I shared this verse with an inmate at the county jail. His remark was, “Thanks, Steve, you really know how to wreck a guy’s party.” Now this young man is pretty sharp, and his response was

made in good humor. But he caught the gist of I Corinthians 10:13 immediately. The great promise of this Scripture also takes away any and all excuses we have for sinning. While Flip Wilson's old line "The devil made me do it!" may apply to the folks outside of Christ, I Corinthians 10:13 makes it clear that the only one who "makes" a Christian sin is the Christian himself.

Jesus once asked a lame man, "Do you wish to be healed?" Many would think that this is a ridiculous question. Of course the man wanted to be healed. But is that always the case? Many today who are on disability or welfare don't want to be healed because they would lose their free money and hand-outs. They might even have to go to work!

Well, unfortunately the same is often true in the spiritual realm. Many today want to be saved in their sins. They want grace to cover them while they keep on sinning and expect God to give them eternity in heaven without their turning away from their sins. I'm afraid the message of I Corinthians 10:13 must also crash their party.

God has provided the way of escape, so we can endure temptation and not succumb to sin. The question is, oh Christian, will you choose God's way or your own?