

How Much Can You Take?

You've often heard people going through a very difficult time say, "God promised not to put more on us than we are able to bear." Where does that promise come from? What does it mean? Is it true? We'll look at the passage of Scripture where this promise originates in today's Templates of Truth.

The Apostle Paul assured the Corinthian believers, *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, that you may be able to endure it* (I Corinthians 10:13). What a relief to know this promise is in place! Without it, most of us would have died in defeat years ago. Life is hard and sometimes we are faced with the most overwhelming circumstances that threaten our very lives and existence. Without some ray of hope & survival, we would simply crumble under the pressure. In this passage lies a truth that all of us can hold on to no matter what situation we are called upon to face in life.

One reason for this hope is that no matter what we are challenged with, it is *common*. We are not alone. There are others in the world who have faced the exact same circumstances that we are facing, and many have survived. Because they survived, we can survive too. What does it take to survive? How can my situation turn into a shining testimony of this Biblical victory? Paul helps us understand three important elements that are involved.

The substance of temptation – The Greek word Paul uses can refer to temptation or a test. No matter what the circumstances are, we always have a choice in the matter. It is not the situation that determines whether it is a temptation or a test, it is our reaction to it. If we allow the situation to *overtake* us, it becomes a temptation to which we give into and sin. If we remain strong & obedient, it becomes a test in which our faithfulness is proven real & genuine.

The source of temptation – For the believer, Satan is a source of temptation; God is the source for testing. But, Paul preferences this promise with this warning: *let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall* (I Corinthians 10:12). Man's pride is a sure set-up for temptation & failure. We must be careful about becoming over-confident with our faith and spiritual growth & maturity. No matter how good and morally strong we are, there is not a single sin any of us are not fully capable of committing. Unless we abide every moment in an intimate, dependent relationship with God, we may certainly become vulnerable to the most deplorable acts of rebellion and unfaithfulness.

The surety of temptation – A surety bond is a guarantee issued and warranted by an insuring agent. In this case, the agent is God – *God is faithful*. God is the one making the promise and backing the guarantee. God is always dependable & reliable, and never fails to uphold His promises. In this passage, there are three provisions: (1) Limited Warranty – *who will not allow you to be tempted (or tested) beyond what you are able*. God made you and saved you. He

knows you like no other. He knows all your capabilities and strengths, as well as your vulnerabilities and weaknesses. He knows what you are able to endure and what will cause you snap under the pressure. (2) Exclusive Warranty – *but with the temptation (or test) will provide the way of escape also*. No other policy has this guarantee and no other agent has the power & resources to provide it than God. No matter what we face in life, there is always a way out or a way through – guaranteed! (3) Satisfaction Guaranteed – *you (will) be able to endure it*. You will survive. You will make it through. Your life may be affected in some way, but your character, faith and perseverance will be greatly improved. You will be satisfied and happy with the ultimate results.

The *way of escape* needs a bit more qualification. Jesus affirmed to us, *I am the way, the truth and the life* (John 14:6). Having a personal relationship with God through His Son, Jesus Christ, is the only way to having this faithful promise operational in our life. Once that relationship has been established, we have to keep the policy paid up. We have to make a personal investment in that relationship on a daily basis to keep it vibrant and effective in our life. Jesus promised, *If you abide in Me and My words abide in you...your joy (will) be made full* (John 15:7,11). If you make a daily habit of walking & talking with Jesus, and being a passionate student of His Word, the Bible, your joy will be full, no matter what life throws at you - Satisfaction guaranteed.

That's today's Templates of Truth. This is your Bible teacher, Rick Smith, reminding you to attend church this Sunday for Bible study and worship, pray for one another, and always strive to abide in Christ. Until next time, have a blessed and glorious day in the Lord Jesus.