How To Battle Temptation

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Preacher: J.D. Edwards

[0:00] As you're turning to Psalm 16, let me read the superscription. We're told this is a miktum of David. Sometimes we get these old Hebrew words like miktum, and the scholars don't know what they mean.

It could be a type of instrument or a melody. That term, miktum, is only used five times in all of the Psalter, 150 psalms. The fact that they're so ancient and the meaning is unknown, it actually adds to the reliability, the credibility of, this is the inspired word of God to ancient prophets long ago like David, preserved by the Holy Spirit through all of the centuries for you today, his people.
And so as I read this, I read it believing and hoping you'll receive it as God's inspired, inerrant, infallible, clear, and sufficient word. It's God's very own word for you, his people.
So at the end, I'll say this is the word of the Lord, and you can say thanks be to God. Psalm 16, a miktum of David. Preserve me, O God, for in you I put my trust.
O my soul, you have said to the Lord, you are my God. My goodness is nothing apart from you. As for the saints who are on the earth, they are the excellent ones in whom is all my delight.
[1:22] Verse 4, Their sorrows shall be multiplied who hasten after another God. Their drink offerings of blood I will not offer, nor take up their names on my lips.

O Lord, you are the portion of my inheritance and my cup. You maintain my lot. The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places.
Yes, I have a good inheritance. I will bless the Lord who has given me counsel. My heart also instructs me in the night seasons.
I have set the Lord always before me because he is at my right hand. I shall not be moved.
Therefore, my heart is glad and my glory rejoices.
My flesh also will rest in hope, for you will not leave my soul in Sheol, nor will you allow your Holy One to see corruption.
[2:24] You will show me the path of life. In your presence is fullness of joy. At your right hand are pleasures forevermore. The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God. You may be seated. Let's pray and ask the Lord to illuminate the ministry of His Word.
Lord, we feel it. We feel the shadows deepen. We feel the darkness all around. We feel these seasons of night.
But you, Jesus Christ, you are the light of God who has shone into the darkness and the darkness has not overcome your light. We thank you that you have shown the gospel to our minds and our hearts.
We thank you, Lord, that you equip your people. Your troops are willing on the day of war. We thank you that our King Jesus is alive. We thank you that you've put in the hands of your people the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God.
[3:58] We ask that by the power of your Spirit alone you will wield the sword, prune your branches, cut us to the heart, Lord, like only you can do.

We ask this for Christ's sake. Amen. What's worth fighting for?
What is it that's worth fighting for? During World War I, there was an English parliamentarian who I'm a big fan of, and his name was G.K. Chesterton.
He had the fun glasses, a very heavyset man. And listen to what he said. The true soldier fights not because he hates what is in front of him, but because he loves what is behind him.
You cannot love a thing without wanting to fight for it. What's worth fighting for? I think Psalm 16 is a psalm about a battle against temptation.

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[5:12] In verse 1, he uses language of taking refuge. If you're in a battle, you need to find a place you can run to and hide. The language of the cup in verse 5, you can picture like a cafeteria scene at the end of the war.

All the loot of the war is piled up, and every soldier gets in line with their cup, and their portion is given to them. In verse 8, he says, because the Lord is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Some of you played on the defensive line in football. If the Lord is at your right hand, you shall not be moved. David knows what it is to go attack and to have a strong right arm that won't get flanked. It's battle language. So, beloved congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ, the message for you today and for me is how to battle temptation.
How to battle temptation. Do you need help with this? I know I do. Number one, we see that the temptation to idolatry is strong.
[6:16] Verse 1, he says, preserve me. Watch over me, O God. The temptation to idolatry is strong. So what is he asking God to preserve him from?

Preserve me. Watch over me, God. We have to drop down to verse 4 to see what that is. He says, there are many within Israel who are hastening after another God.
Verse 4, they drink these offerings of blood. These are people within the nation who have given up hope, who have turned and are running now after these idols of the pagans.
They have these worship services with real blood. blood. Not wine or the fruit of the vine, but actual blood. Some scholars say these pagan nations would drink actual human blood as part of their ritual.
And David's asking God to preserve him from that, from that temptation. He says, I will not take up their names on my lips. I can't do that.
[7:20] I can't be associated with that. So David is asking God to preserve him from doing what it feels like everyone else is doing, chasing after the idols of the world.

Preserve me, God. Watch over me so I don't do that. The temptation to idolatry is strong. So an idol, it could be crafted out of wood, silver, gold, and then you would worship this little statue that you made of a creature.
Something else that God made under the sun and now you're worshiping it as if it were the creator. But idolatry is broader than that in the Bible. Idolatry means that you are giving any creature that which only God deserves.
The temptation to idolatry is strong. Matthew Henry pointed out, you and I, we have fallen into idolatry every time we have placed our greatest happiness in a creature.
if we have sought the comfort or satisfaction that that good that can only be enjoyed in God might come to me from an idol. Instead, we've fallen into idolatry.
[8:35] Idolatry can be summarized as John did in 1 John 2.6. It could be anything that is tempting me through the lust of the flesh, the body, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.

In other words, it's anything that's of this world, anything for the material world, for the senses, the pride of this world. The reason the battle against temptation is so strong is because it doesn't just come at us from the world, it comes from inside of us as well.
That's the source of pride is my own heart. My own body craves the comforts or satisfactions of things of this world. We need to pay attention because if Calvin was right, it affects all of us.
He said, every one of us is, even from his mother's womb, a master craftsman of idols. We're warned in 1 Timothy 6.9, you too can fall into temptation, into a snare, into many foolish and harmful lusts which will drown you, destroy you, and will lead you to perdition.
And that's what David sees happening. People from his own country, the kingdom that God has claimed, they're following after these idols and it leads to perdition.
[10:02] Perdition is the utter loss of your soul. Your final happiness in a future state is utterly lost. You will instead face misery and eternal death if you chase after these idols.

but the temptation is strong. So number two, how do we pray? How do we pray in a battle with temptation?
If temptation were only coming at us from the world, we don't battle it, we simply flee, you know, flee temptation. But because it comes from inside of us, we have to battle this. And what weapons does God give us to battle the temptations that creep up through our own hearts?
Well, I believe in verses 1, 2, and 3, he shows us how to pray under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Pray this way in your battle with temptation. Number one, confess your dependence on God.

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Look at verse 1. Preserve me, watch over me, God, because only God can preserve you. Because He watches over you. He is the one who has to hold you fast.
[11:06] It has to be His power to strengthen you, to preserve you. Yes, you persevere in the Christian faith, but only because God is preserving you. So confess your dependence on God.

Number two, how do we pray? You assess, realistically assess, who or what is worthy of your trust. Assess who is trustworthy. He says in verse 1, in you, I put my trust.
You can try putting your trust in anything else, and you will be disappointed. Only God is worthy of your full trust. Proverbs 3, 5 reminds us, trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding.
2 Peter 2, 9, the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations. He knows how. You and I don't know how. Don't trust your own heart. Trust in the Lord.
He is worthy of your trust. Number three, remember God's goodness to you. Don't we so quickly forget how good God is. How good God has been to me.
[12:16] In verse 2, he says, O my God, O my soul, you have said to the Lord, you have said to Yahweh, you are my Lord, my captain, my master.

My goodness is nothing apart from you. Do you see in verse 2, there's two words for Lord. I think most English Bibles are going to use all caps when it's Yahweh.
So, Lord in all caps would be Yahweh. And if it's lower caps, it would be like a boss or a general, a commander. So, O my soul, you have said to Yahweh, you are my master.
My goodness is nothing apart from you. Remember God's goodness to you. this word goodness, this is an adjective means pleasant, agreeable, or good.
It's the same word that God used in Genesis 2 speaking of his creation. He saw all that he had made and it was good. He made it. In fact, it was very good. The psalmist is declaring that back to God.
[13:26] My goodness is nothing apart from you. In the original, the wording is like this, my good is nothing beyond you. In other words, when I am in you, it is all good.

The moment a part of me reaches beyond you or outside of you, there's nothing good there. Remind yourself of this truth. There is no good apart from God.
Look what happens to those who chase after idols in verse 4. The sorrows of those who worship idols shall be multiplied. They turned this one thing into an idol.
Gave themselves to it. Well, here comes another idol now. The need to cover it up and another to deal with that guilt and it just multiplies the sorrow of worshiping anything less than God.
There is no good outside of God. I think it was the Belgic Confession said, God is the overflowing fountain of all good.
[14:32] There is no good outside of God. Remember God's goodness to you. And number four, how do you pray in temptation?

You pray with your Bible open. Prayer is talking to God and listening to God. Look at verse three. As you pray, read these words for yourself.
how God sees you. How good he is to you. In verse three, as for the saints who are on the earth, they are the excellent ones in whom is my delight, says the Lord.
That's how God sees you. Read it for yourself. Psalm 16 3, read it over and over. This is how God sees you in his son.
God sees you as a saint. He sees you in Christ as excellent. He sees you in Christ as his delight. That's how God sees you.
[15:33] Don't let Satan accuse God to you otherwise. There was a Christian in the 1200s named Bonaventure and he wrote like a journal of this experience.

Satan was accusing him of previous sins and Satan was telling him, Bonaventure, you're not going to heaven. Remember your sins? Remember all that you've done?
You lived a sinful life. You lived for worldly pleasure. How could God let someone like you be with him forever? And by the power of the Holy Spirit encouraging him and assuring him of salvation, Bonaventure replied to Satan, if I may not enjoy God in the next life, then let me enjoy him in this life.
You battle Satan. Don't let him tempt you or accuse you. You don't want to live in sin because the goodness is in God. That's the only source. He is the fount of all good.

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That's how we pray from Psalm 16, 1-3 in temptation. Well, with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, what we get in verses 5-9, in my understanding, is a testimony of victory over temptation.
[16:54] Here's how you pray in the battle, and here's a testimony of someone on the far side who had victory over a temptation. Hear their testimony and be encouraged. Picture yourself, if you're a soldier and you're being enlisted, you're going to be sent off to war, wouldn't it be helpful to talk to a veteran?

Here's someone who's been there and who came back and is alive, and he can give you this testimony of victory. You're going to be okay, son. What do we see in 5-9?
The testimony is contentment first. He's content, he's full, he's blessed because he has God. Verse 5, O Lord, you are the portion of my inheritance and my cup.
I went to battle in your army. I did not come back disappointed. In fact, what I got is so much better than any idol I could have chased. What I got was you.
You are my portion. What goes inside my little soldier's cup is God himself. I get the Holy Spirit. I get to belong to him. I'm content.
[18:02] I'm full. Number two, I'm grateful. God proved himself trustworthy again. In verse 5, he says, you maintain, you uphold my lot.

The land you gave me, Lord, on the other side of the battle, it's not going to be taken away. No one can threaten it. You uphold this lot, what you've given me.
In verse 6, we see satisfaction. He's satisfied with all that God has provided. God is generous. God is bountiful. Just as God provided for the nation through Joshua as they came into the promised land, he uses the same language in verse 6.
So listen for these words, lines that have fallen, places, and inheritance. Throughout the book of Joshua, that's how the people of Israel are given a place to live in the land God promised.
In verse 6, he says, the lines have fallen to me in pleasant places. Yes, I have a good inheritance. David, now the king, he looks and he says, I can praise God just like the nation of Israel under Joshua as they entered the land.
[19:14] I can praise him using that same language. God has given me a dwelling place. He's provided all that I need. And it's pleasant. It's good. The fourth testimony is that God strengthens you.

First, he strengthens your mind. In verse 7, he says, I will bless the Lord who has given me counsel. The Lord has strengthened my mind. I can see more clearly.
He is the path in front of me, opening it up. I was dark, but now it's light. He's counseled. He's given strength to my mind so I can march following him. He also strengthens the heart.
He says, my heart also instructs me in the night seasons. It's not just intellectual. I feel it. The Hebrew is the kidneys. In verse 7, my kidneys also instruct me in the night seasons.
We would say my gut. My gut tells me this is the way to walk with God. I know what it is. His spirit inside me shows me. And we are strengthened for battle.
[20:20] Verse 8, I have set the Lord always before me because he is at my right hand. I shall not be moved. He has already said, I have no goodness apart from you.

My only reason I can trust that I have any hope in the battle is because it's God himself as my strength, my right hand. Not only is he strengthened, the testimony is one of happiness.
In verse 9, therefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoices. His heart and his glory, his inner man is happy in the Lord.
The idol promises a quick happiness, something worldly that's going to make you feel something or feel happy. You think in the moment, that's the temptation. And the testimony is when the Lord is at your right hand, that's true happiness.
That's when your inner being will rejoice. Not only is he happy, he's also hopeful. Verse 9, my flesh will also dwell securely in hope.
[21:30] The Lord at my right hand is my happiness on the inside, my hope, even for my own flesh, my own body as I walk this world. That's the testimony of one who has reached the far side of temptation, one who has been victorious.

James 1.12 echoes this, 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.
But now we need to ask the question, who is the one that reaches the far side of temptation victorious? To whom does God promise the spoils of victory?

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To whom does God promise all of these blessings on the other side of the battle? if you've been following along with our series in the Psalms, we saw in Psalm 14, leading up to this one, how all have turned aside.
None who do good, no, not one. So who can receive all the blessings of the battle? In Psalm 15, right before this, it's who may dwell with God?
[22:43] We sang the last two weeks, Psalm 24, who may ascend the holy hill. And before we answer that question directly, look at verse 11 of our sermon text, Psalm 16, 11.

The person in the temptation gives a testimony of fullness of joy and pleasures forevermore. So while you're in the battle, fighting temptation in this world, there's also a foretaste of something much more glorious.
Verse 11, in your presence is fullness of joy. There's no room for any sadness. There's no room for distraction.
Don't we long for that? But the longing of the heart is the eternity that only God can give. And it grows.
He says, at your right hand are pleasures forevermore uninterrupted, unbroken. As we're working with some of our folks that are regular attenders toward baptism, this is an important question.
[24:04] I'm saved. I'm a disciple of Christ. Will I still sin? If I get baptized now, what happens if I sin after I get baptized? baptized? And we wrestle with this.

As we've talked with the men on Wednesday mornings, we know it's only the power of God to sanctify a Christian. And it's the power of God working in us, but yet in this world, it's a battle.
It's a battle. Why does God leave us to battle so hard in this world? And I love how our confession of faith, the second London, chapter 5, paragraph 5, explains the full counsel of biblical truth.
The most wise, righteous, and gracious God does oftentimes leave for a season His own children to manifold temptations and the corruptions of their own hearts.
Why? To chastise them for their former sins, to discover unto them the hidden strength of corruption and deceitfulness of their hearts, that they may be humbled, and to raise them to a more close and constant dependence for their support upon Himself, and to make them more watchful against all future occasions of sin, and for other just and holy ends, so that whatsoever befalls any of God's elect is by His appointment for His glory and for their good.
[25:28] Amen? Well, let's answer the question now, to whom does God promise the spoils of victory? look at verse 10, Psalm 16, 10.

You will not leave my soul in Sheol. Sheol is the abode or the dwelling place of the dead. It's where the dead bodies go and stay.
Nor will you allow your Holy One to see corruption. You will not let your Holy One undergo decay.
We need to let the Scriptures interpret the Scriptures. As the Puritan said, only diamond can cut diamond. So who is Psalm 16 ultimately pointing to?
Well, Peter stood up in Acts 2, verse 25, and he preached, quoting David, who had said about the Lord Jesus Christ, I saw the Lord always before me because He is at my right hand.
[26:34] I will not be shaken. So the Bible interprets Psalm 16 as pointing to Jesus Christ. The only one to whom God can truly promise the spoils of the victory justly is the Holy One.

It's the one whose body will not see corruption and decay. And the good news for us is that because Christ fulfilled Psalm 16, He is the only source of power for us now in this battle that we walk on earth.
Our righteousness, our sanctification is nothing apart from Christ. Amen? Let me walk through ten ways our Lord Jesus Christ became your goodness and mine, your righteousness, your source of power and victory.
Number one, Jesus Christ became your righteousness when He was tempted as we read in Luke 4.
Why was Jesus tempted? He lacked nothing. He's God.
It's because we often don't put our trust in God to preserve us. That's why Jesus had to took on flesh and He had to pray what we could never pray perfectly.
[27:49] Preserve me, O God, for in You I put my trust. Number two, because we need His righteousness, since we often forget that our goodness is nothing apart from Him, Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary, not inheriting any sin from man.

And Jesus Christ became the good new creation. In Christ, you are saints on this earth, you are excellent ones, and you are God's delight.

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Number three, because our idolatry multiplies our sorrows, you picture a pile of damp filth with cockroaches all around it. being multiplied, growing, becoming a heap, that's what it is to worship an idol.
And because that's the state that we're in, we're buried under that sorrow of sin, Jesus Christ became the man of sorrows. He made your ugly sin and mine his own, so that he could turn around and share the blessings, the spoils of war, the portion and the cup that he merited on our behalf, freely, by grace, to you who receive it.
Number four, because we were prodigals, we spat at our father's kindness, our Lord Jesus Christ became the true and greater Joshua, Yeshua.
[29:17] He gave us a perfect inheritance. What we inherit in Christ is marked out by generous lines over pleasant places. and even under the son, we enjoy his providence.

We take delight in all that he's given us to be able to enjoy and remembering that there's no good apart from him. Number five, because we often lean on our own understanding, our Lord Jesus Christ walked in perfect step with the Holy Spirit.
Verse seven, the Spirit counseled him in the flesh so that the Holy Spirit can now dwell in our hearts and instruct us in those night seasons as well.
We can receive the Holy Spirit because God counts us holy in Christ. Because we are often moved by the idols of our own heart, our Lord Jesus became our righteousness.
In the words of verse eight, he set God always before his sight and with the Holy Spirit at his right hand, our Lord Jesus Christ was never moved, not even in the final breaths on the cross.
[30:29] He would not disobey. He would fulfill all righteousness for us. Number seven, while we were hopeless, shameful, and sad, our Lord Jesus Christ endured the cross for the joy set before him, despising its shame so that he can now sing over you and me.

Be glad of heart with me. Rejoice in my glory. I died and I rose hoping for you.
Number eight, because the grave and death are the wages that our sins deserve, the last enemy to be destroyed is death. Our Lord Jesus Christ died and was buried trusting, verse 10, that God will not leave his soul in the realm of the dead.
Our Lord Jesus Christ became God's holy one. He was buried, trusting that God would not let his body see decay or corruption. Number nine, because we were blind sheep without a shepherd, our Lord Jesus Christ sent his Holy Spirit to show us in verse 11 the path of life and how only in Christ's presence is fullness of joy.
Because Christ is seated at the right hand of God, we are with him in the presence of God where there are pleasures forevermore. Number ten, Jesus battled to be our vine, truly God, truly man, the only mediator, so that we could abide in him and have communion with God.
[32:14] And as we abide in Christ, we experience the truth of second Peter that his divine power in fact gives us all that we need for life and godliness through the knowledge of him, Jesus Christ who called us.

Our only source of power to have victory over temptation is union to Christ. So beloved congregation of our Lord Jesus, God proved by the life, death, and resurrection of his son, that you are worth fighting for.
Jesus Christ is the true soldier. It's true that you cannot love a thing without wanting to fight for it. And our Lord Jesus Christ, he fought for you and for me because he loves you.
He took on flesh and battled every temptation that we will face and he was victorious. He leaves his Holy Spirit in you.
He is at your right hand. He is your strength. And he reminds you that in his presence are pleasures forevermore. So here's the secret to sanctification.
[33:33] Every time you believe him and trust him, the battle is won. Let's pray. Amen. Lord, we praise you for your righteousness.

We thank you, Lord, that you battled to save a people for yourself. Lord, we pray that you will preserve us when Satan wants to accuse you to us that we'll remember how good you are and how there is no pleasure that earth can offer that could even come close to the glory of being in your presence forevermore.
We trust you, Lord, that your spirit will preserve us and remind us that you are good. And in Christ, we will desire more and more to walk by your power in us.
For your glory we pray. Amen.

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