**Series**: Stories from Lockdown

**Title**: 2. Temptation under Lockdown

**Scripture:** 1Cor 10:6-13

**Description**: Are you facing temptation in lockdown? Two possible scenarios, but the same solution.

# FCF

* extended lockdown; now less of an adventure, and more unhappiness; disappointment for returning : various idioms humanity develops in this world... - the need to 'let off steam'; 'coming to the end of the rope'
* rife with *Peirasmos*, trial >> temptation

# Continuing series - "Stories from Lockdown" - Daniel

* Continuing in our series...Stories from Lockdown, Daniel - temptation under lockdown.
* Daniel in Lockdown : think: that night in "the den" with the lions!
* But actually, no indication of temptation there... There was another lockdown, before this : by the political conniving of peers, who corner him into a trial he couldn't escape unscathed. In 6:5, in envy they say, "*we will not find any ground for complaint against this Daniel unless we find it in connection with the law of his god*" - [they pitch Daniel's faith against his security]. So they get the King Darius (Friend of Daniel) to foolishly make an ordinance preventing anyone in his kingdom from praying except to Darius himself, under threat of lions.
* Daniel had no chance to escape, except by skirting his faith and worship - **that's temptation**

APP / Summary

* Lockdown is producing trials, and temptation ***in the home***.
* An almost-unparalleled time to identify it, and deal with it. Like a time of fasting; which unveils the heart.

Our text: **1 Corinthians 10:6-14**; a go-to passage for counsel in temptation.

# READ 1 Cor 10v6-14

# Proposition: Counsel for 2 different experiences of temptation

* **This counsel actually implies people can have 2 different perspectives on temptation:**
* 1 - Those who **feel beyond temptation**
* 2 - Those who **feel swamped by temptation**
* both those perspectives need correction! The first need Warning, The second need Encouragement,
* But beyond that, it's still the **same counsel for both: "Flee"** . Either way whether you feel safe or swamped, "**temptation is overcome the same way: by Fleeing**"; IE don't get "locked-down in temptation!"

# Pray

# For the person who feels beyond temptation during lockdown: (11-12)

* "You aren't"
* **APP**: Maybe this sermon topic feels irrelevant to you, quite confident that temptation is not a problem
* **Read 11-12**

CORINTH CONFIDENCE CONFRONTED

* **context**: seems to be a Confident church - they have everything worked out; proud;
  + Paul repeatedly pulling them down to earth.
* and he does it again here by means of "*the example*", of (in v1) the "fathers" - Jewish ancestors, who had reason to be confident of status, yet who (in v5) **overthrown in wilderness**
  + - [sounds like Hebrews?!]
  + in v6 he says: '*these things took place as examples*' - and then in next 4 verses he gives 4 different cases of being overthrown,
  + But then in **v11** he says, 'All *these* [many cases] (reflecting back) took place as AN example'... They really form ONE 'example.\_' = One lesson...
  + ... which is **v12** - '*Therefore, let the one who thinks that he stands*' ([self-confidence]) "**watch out**" - He *may fall*.
  + **IE >> The counsel** (to the one who feels beyond temptation) **is a warning.**

APP : 21ST CENTURY LOCKDOWN TEMPATIONS

* Those 4 cases feel a bit ancient. Can they really speak to us today? What we need to acknowledge is that those 4 cases were ancient to the Corinthians too - about 1500 years removed!: from language, culture, society, technology, even progressive revelation - now with the Gospel; So we have no reason to say that the same Example is too ancient for us.
* [**APP** - These can apply to us ... we might even overlook that some of these are very real in lockdown - [ have sympathy - they were most times in distress when they gave in!]
  + v7: (Ex ch32) - **got tired of waiting for God, customised their own - a different god with different values**
  + v8: (Num ch25) - mingled with and **imbibed the sexual values of ungodly world** - probably felt nice to escape from the trials of the wilderness into fantasty? This was as big in Corinth, and 21st cent.
  + v9: (Num ch21) - **impatience - extended journey to the promised land - complained against God;** desiring release to work, earn, visit - causing irritation within the home
  + \*10: (Num ch13) - **spies bring back bad news of future,** fear, disbelief: - living in the seen world only
* This list isn't comprehensive. How do you identify temptation in lockdown? Ask, "Where am I feeling squeezed, and what's coming out?" - Peirazmos : Trial > Temptation. There is an intensity of temptation in lockdown. cf Fasting. - If we look harder, we may discern:
  + (**6:10 - lockdown** ) Greed, // Drunkenness, // Reviling authority // Swindling
  + (and **Gal 5:16f**) strife //, jealousy, // fits of anger: [ "this is not what i signed up for"] , rivalry-competition //

THE WARNING EXAMPLE

* So, the Corinthians had their own context, and we have ours : There are Varied temptations ... but Timeless Pattern ("**the Example**") ["3D pattern"]:
  + they Desired evil, (passion, drive)
  + they Did evil, (behaviour)
  + they Died (in vv8,9,10 '*fell*','*destroyed*','*perished*')
* And this is what we need to accept regarding this example, whatever time we live in...
  + 1. **the example really \*happened\*** [these things, to these people : not scary tales for controlling the masses]
  + 2. **the example was written** [not for controlling masses but] **"for our counsel"** - *noutheow* = to put into the mind; inform thinking]
    - in fact, "**the example has come to the end of the ages"** - not making the point that we have come to the end of the ages, but that *this example* is true to the end of the ages, The example is **still relevant in the End Hour we live in** - we're **not** beyond **warning**;

NOW

* Now, doesn't it strike you that '*he who thinks he stands*'(12) '*may desire evil*' [see]

v12: 'he who thinks he stands, lest he fall [desiring evil, v6]'

* + >> Here's the core of the warning: You cannot let yourself feel beyond temptation because  
    **our "think" doesn't control our "desire"**
  + the mind doesn't control the flesh
  + (12) "who thinks he stands" is in the PFT tense: ie "*I have stood the test of time*"
  + >> The warning is, You can't look to the past and say, "I know what I didn't desire in the past... therefore I know what I will desire in the future".
  + the mind cannot predict or control the flesh
* [SO If you feel quite confident this topic doesn't apply, because you haven't wrestled with temptation during lockdown, **then it's precisely for you**.
  + (ps! "who thinks he stands lest he ***Fall***" in (12) is the same in (8) : *23k fell in one day*. Such a person could have the same fall)

# Daniel: ILLUS

* ***Temptation*** is ***pressure to distrust God*** - distrust His timing, His Providence, His Goodness
* Here are some of the temptations Daniel **did face** under a enclosing lockdown that pressed him: **temptation...**
  + **to fear lion - 200kg king of beasts - paws the size of a human head.**
  + **to stop 'serving** God continually' (6:20) - just 30 days to appease Darius (a friend, who would understand Daniel's faith anyway)
  + **to publically pretend** **to comply with the dishonour of God**, but pray secretly - God knows the heart...
  + **to connive**, by his influence as the most excellent president, retaliate to other presidents/satraps
  + **to despise the king** who'd not considered Daniel when he made that ordinance (21-22)
  + maybe even to doubt God? ...
* He **couldn't** look back at his past behaviour and be confident about his future. But **he could look back at God's past** **behaviour** (when Nebuchadnezzar tried to burn him alive, ch3), **and trust God yet again**.

*But now there's another very different experience of temptation during lockdown:*

# For the person who feels swamped by temptation during lockdown: (13)

* The truth is - we **all** are, aren't we? Even Daniel. The time comes, and the desire is ready
* How must we **interpret the moments of temptation**? (that moment: you feel no strength
* **READ v13**
  + *note* the end: "**That you may be able to endure it**" ..
* FCF Misunderstanding : we think (say) we are unable to endure, often with one of 2 reasons: because the temptation is too unique or too strong
  + **But** ... what **makes** us "*able to endure"*  is, "***God is Faithful***"
* **ILLUS**: Daniel - with all those options to him, he knew there was only one option : Carry on Trusting Obediently, because ***God is Faithful***

Dan 6:10 "When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem. He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done previously"

* Wow - our little temptations in lockdown don't compare. But even in that temptation, Daniel refused to let it lock him down.
* **There are the 2 GREAT PROMISES for us when we are swamped by temptation:**
  + a. "*He will not let you be tempted beyond your ability*"
    - strong: "will not permit you to be tempted". The sense: **request denied**.

31 "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, 32 but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. (Luk 22:31-32 ESV)

* + - He is Your Protector. You are **completely God-size shielded**. There is a divine boundary. - which means there is grace and purpose in that temptation: see Jas *1:testing of your faith*
      * Daniel was thrown to the lions because it was **not** beyond his ability to trust God in that situation
      * **Feel overwhelmed**? Don't. God has a boundary - and you're able to reject temptation within it! That's the first promise!!
  + AND SECONDLY
  + b. "*With the temptation he will also provide the way of escape*"
    - (...***not saying*** he provides temptation and with it an escape! Jas 1:13 says God himself peirazo's no one; led away by own desires)
    - But that **there is an exit** - it will not be endless! [ In the moment we only have the immediate senses... but there is a promise - ***if you bear (and you can)***, ***the exit will come***. He is Your Provider.
      * ILLUS: God literally exited Daniel out of the den, If God does that, what will he not do for you? He does. He's done it for me, when I've trusted Him
* **You** are vulnerable, but **God** is faithful. See with **new perspective** - you may be swamped, but never overwhelmed.

# The Counsel for either perspective: Flee (14)

* cf last week "How to Live by Faith under Lockdown" - bearing temptation is a huge part of that
* Written with such tenderness; 'my beloved'. Strong words from the heart that only loves.
* Either way, *whether you're feeling strong, or swamped* - **it's the same counsel: Flee**. Like Daniel - away from temptation,
* **READ 14**
* ***Flee*** - a word of urgency. God is protecting and will provide - but that doesn't prevent you from giving in - whether you feel vulnerable or not

# Some Practical counsel we can take from this

* **Anticipate it:** 
  + ( Worth observing: **Paul identifies himself with them** in temptation: (8 & 9, *"we must"*) - RESONATED WITH SOME. NO ONE IS INVULNERABLE. In wilderness, large numbers of people failing : it was not easy to abstain, it was easy to fall in
  + > From the beginning of Lockdown I've anticipated many homes becoming rife for temptation.
  + LOCKDOWN and the aftershock is rife for greed, self provision, letting loose on family
* **Capture it:**
  + Daniel's behaviour is quite instructive isn't it:
  + Daniel had a readiness for the temptation - so that WHEN he heard, he went away to worship. "WHEN" = Immediate. And that is so important - to not let temptation linger.
  + ***flee*** means : don't hang around - that's a sure way to get locked down, dragged down - flee to Christ
* **Prepare for it**
  + Daniel had a routine before the temptation which helped - "got on his knees, prayed, gave thanks as he had done every other day"
* **Repent from it**
  + You will fail. So when you do, Repent: it was not too unique or too strong; God had you; and you didn't trust Him.
  + But 1 John 1 says, if anyone sins, we have an advocate, Jesus Christ. And Hebrews 4 says, He our High Priest is able to sympathise, and has made a once-for-all time offering if Himself on your behalf which is sufficient.
  + Flee... to Christ.