

## Week 34: February 17th



### Temptation

I'm sure you all know the well-known saying "I can resist everything except Temptation"! That unfortunately is me. It goes alongside my desire to lose weight and the fridge magnet that says DIET = Did I Eat That! Whoever had the brain to work out that is what DIET means was very clever.

Temptations come in all shapes and sizes and the reality is we cannot ignore them or escape from them, they are bombarded at us from without and within. BUT what is within our control is how we respond to the temptations that are all around us.

But not all temptations are bad! This Christmas I saw an advert for OXFAM on TV. It was to buy cubes that made dirty water clean and I was totally taken in and tempted by the advert to buy some. "I want that" can be selfish or it can actually be a prompt to make a difference. One definition of temptation is "a thing or something that attracts someone" and there are many things that I long for and am attracted to - I have to say that I am attracted to the idea of peace for all, that I am attracted to the hope that children will not have to be fearful of adults who misuse them, but have safe and stable homes. I am attracted to the possibility that I can be the best I can be.

The trouble is temptation is often selfish and takes no account of how others feel or what it may do to them or ourselves in the long run, and that is totally the opposite of what happened for Jesus in the wilderness. He refused to use his powers for himself, but he always gave the glory to God, although he refused to make bread for himself, he provided bread for others both in the feeding of the 5,000 and of himself at the Last Supper and his final refusal to be saved by the angels, gave him the courage and strength to be nailed to a cross.

When we are able to turn away from temptations that hurt others or ourselves then they have no control over us and we are free. In the Harry Potter stories there is a mirror of ERISED (which is desire spelt backwards) and those who look in it see their deepest desires, so only someone who looks and sees themselves is truly content with who they are and what they have. I would want that for me, to be truly content with who I am and what I have, but I also would want a heart of compassion and zeal to enable me not to be content but speak out about injustice and the other wrongs in our world today.

**Lord God when I am tempted to do or be something I shouldn't - give me strength and courage to stand firm, but when I am tempted not to act on another's behalf when I should, move me to do what is right. Let Christ be my guide in all things, that I may be strong as he was and faithful to your calling in my life. Amen**