INTRODUCTION:
A. 1 Corinthians 10:13 – “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.”
B. Picture with me now a man entering the Texas State penitentiary.
  1. The iron gates forcefully close behind him as he walks down the long corridor.
  2. There are some things about him I would like for you to think about.
    a. He is in for twenty years for attempted rape.
    b. The man is a Christian . . . a preacher . . . a graduate of a Christian college.
    c. After his college days, he had served as the minister of two congregations . . . both of them were very successful when evaluated by human terms.
    d. He had demonstrated a fantastic ability in the field of evangelism.
    e. He was considered to be a great teacher.
  3. Several men had testified at his trial.
    a. They testified that he has changed their lives by motivating them toward a deeper commitment in discipleship.
    b. Others spoke of being led to Christ by him. They spoke of his apparent sincerity.
    c. They said that, as he preached one could sense the power and presence of God.
  4. This man had left his print upon:
    a. His family.
    b. The congregation.
    c. The community.
    d. All those whose lives he had touched.
  5. And now he is in a Texas penitentiary. In one dark moment of temptation fell into the abyss of sin.
    a. He ruined his reputation.
    b. He destroyed his ministry.
    c. He hurt the church.
    d. He left an ugly stain upon the testimony of Jesus Christ.
  5. Many questions are left.
    a. What is it . . . what happens in a person’s life that would cause him to do such a thing?
b. What do you suppose went through his mind?
c. What is it that causes one to pay such a high price for a moment of sin’s pleasure?
d. What is it that leads a person to such destruction?

C. As we consider these questions, we realize we are not just asking about this preacher, but about ourselves.
1. As Christian people temptation dogs us at every turn. Satan never gives up.
2. While many of our sins may not be as open to the public as this preacher who fell, they are just as wrong and condemning to our souls. Satan never quits.
3. Have you ever said “I know this is wrong . . . I know this is a sin, but I want it anyway?” So, we do it.

D. What is it that brings us to such a decision?
1. Ever since the Garden of Eden, people have faced temptation. For Adam and Eve, it was the forbidden fruit. For us, it could be drugs or sex or cheating or lying. Fortunately, God makes two important promises for me to remember when I'm being tempted.
   a. First, He'll make sure the temptation is never more than I can bear. It might be more than I can handle by myself, but it can't possibly be more than God can handle. He's always there for me to lean on.
   b. Second, God promises to give me a way out of the temptation. He'll show me the way if I ask. He's already given me a lot of advice in the Bible. Memorizing his Word helps me to know the right thing to do. Without God, I wouldn't have a chance against temptation. With God, I know I can stand strong.

UNDERSTANDING THE GENESIS OF TEMPTATION
A. 1 John 2:15-16 – “Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.”
   1. I have read that there are over 600 different sins.
   2. Every sin can be cataloged under one of these three categories.
   3. Every temptation will come through one of these three avenues.

B. Satan tempted Eve.
1. The “Lust of the Flesh” – Eve “saw that the tree was good for food.”
2. The “Lust of the eyes” – “It was pleasant to the eyes” of Eve
3. The “Pride of Life” – Eve saw it as “A tree desirable to make one wise.”

C. Satan tempted Jesus Christ.
1. The “Lust of the Flesh” – “Command that these stones become bread.”
2. The “Lust of the eyes” – (High Mountain) “Showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory.”

3. The “Pride of Life” – (Pinnacle of the Temple) “Throw yourself Down” so the angels can lift you up. Invitation to show off.

D. In Genesis 3:1-6 we have a case study in Temptation.

1. We need to watch the way Satan comes to Eve.
   a. He did not say, “I have come to tempt you.”
   b. He did not say, “I have come to kill you.”
   c. He did not say, “I have come to introduce sin and death into the world through you.
   d. He did not say, “I have come to inject pain and suffering and pain into the world through you.”
   e. He did not say, “I have come to cause you to hurt the very heart of God.”
   f. He did not say, “I have come to take all that is presently good and wonderful in your life away from you.”
   g. He did not say, “I have come to deceive you, and trick you, and destroy you.

2. We recognize that while this story comes to us out of the ancient past . . .
   a. It is as up-to-date as the temptation that you may be facing today.
   b. It is as up-to-date as the temptation you faced last night . . . or last week.
      1. In your office.
      2. At your exercise gym.
      3. At school.
      4. On a date.
      5. At a friend’s house.
      6. At home.

3. You see . . . the scene . . . the names . . . and the places have changed, but the methodology has not.
   a. Satan has used . . . and continues to use . . . this time tested pattern.
   b. Why should he give it up when it is so successful.
   c. Friends, since he will not give it up, we need to learn about Satan and how he works in our lives so we can defeat him and the temptations he places before us.

E. Jesus was tempted in the same three ways:

1. The very same three categories of temptation.
   a. “Lust of the flesh” – Stones be made bread.
   b. “Pride of life” Throw yourself down from the pinnacle of the temple.
   c. “Lust of the eyes” – All of the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them.

2. Similarities:
   1. We have the same adversary . . . The Devil.
   2. We have the same tools for overcoming . . . The Word of God.
3. We have the same blessings . . . The approval of God.
4. Satan will challenge us with three things:
   a. Desire
   b. Deception
   c. Doubt

F. Five Pertinent Questions about Temptation:
1. What is temptation? Temptation is a seduction to do evil . . . A solicitation to do evil . . . An effort to persuade to do evil.
2. Where does temptation come from?
   a. It DOES NOT come from God . . . Never has . . . Never will!
   b. James 1:13 – “Let no one say when he is tempted, ‘I am being tempted by God’; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.”
3. Are trials the same thing as temptations?
   a. No . . . definitely not!
   b. Temptation is a seduction to do evil . . . . . A solicitation to do evil.
   c. A trial is a test. Trials seek to discover a person’s moral qualities or character for the purpose of strengthening them.
   d. God tries . . . . . Satan tempts.
4. Can temptations be avoided?
   a. Hebrews 4:15 – “For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.”
   b. Hebrews 2:18 – “For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted.”
   c. Luke 4:13 – “When the devil had finished every temptation, he left Him until an opportune time.”
5. Can temptations be overcome before they overcome us? Yes . . . Definitely yes!
      1. Jesus used Scriptures because they meant something to Him.
      2. Jesus used Scriptures because they held God’s power.
      3. Jesus used Scriptures because they held God’s will.
      4. Jesus used Scriptures because they could help Him then and there.
   b. 1 Corinthians 10:13 – “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.”
WHEN SATAN COMES, HE DISGUISES HIS PERSON . . . PURPOSE . . . TACTICS . . . THE PENDING CONSEQUENCES

A. One of the first things we recognize from Genesis 3 is that when Satan comes, he comes to us in a disguise.
   1. Moses, the author of the Book of Genesis, tells us that the serpent is more crafty, more cunning than the other animals.
      a. The King James translation renders it as subtle.
      b. The word could be translated smoothness.
      c. Moses is saying that when the serpent came to Eve, he didn’t come in ugliness.
   2. We need to remember that the temptations came before the curse, before the serpent is destined to crawl on the ground.
      a. There are no warning rattlers here that the serpent is about to strike.
      b. There is no proud standing king cobra with it hood widened.
      c. There is no coiled position warning of an impending strike.
      d. Satan does not come with:
         1. The roar of a lion.
         2. Or the wail of a siren.
         3. Nor does he come waving a red fag warning us of his danger in our lives.
         4. There is no silver robot preceding it saying, “Danger, Will Robinson; Danger, Will Robinson.”

B. Satan slides into our lives.
   1. He comes easing in as a comfortable concerned companion.
   2. He wants what he offers (sin) to look good and feel good. He wants it to be such that you will come back for more . . . and more . . . and more.
   3. He wants to us to feel that there is nothing about him that we should dread or fear.

C. The New Testament tells us that he often comes:
   1. As an angel of light. 2 Corinthians 11:14
   2. As a minister of righteousness.
   3. Resembling God.

D. One thing we can always count on is that when Satan comes, he will come disguised.
   1. Perhaps he will come disguised as a beautiful blue-eyed blond or brunette.
   2. Perhaps he will come disguised as a new business opportunity.
   3. Perhaps he will come disguised as a bottle or can of some alcoholic beverage.
   4. Perhaps he will come disguised as a new way of feeling good, the end desire of some drug.
   5. Perhaps he will come disguised in a book . . . magazine . . . video . . . or movie . . . or a pornographic web site.
E. The problem is that:
   1. We won’t know who he is.
   2. We won’t know what his intentions are.
   3. We won’t know until he has us by the throat.
F. Remember this: **SATAN COMES IS A DISGUISE.**

**THINGS TO REMEMBER ABOUT TEMPTATION**

A. Temptations do not come for our good . . . But for our destruction.
B. The acceptance of Temptation introduced sin into the world and the acceptance of it will inject sin into your life.
C. God does not tempt us. James 1:13
D. Pray that you may avoid temptation. Matthew 26:41 – “Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”
E. Like Joseph, flee from temptation. Genesis 39:6-15
D. Be on guard. 1 Peter 5:9 – “Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.”
E. Don’t play with temptation.
   1. Proverbs 1:16 – “He who keeps the commandment keeps his soul, But he who is careless of conduct will die.”
   2. **Illustration:** In the Australian bush grows a little plant called the “sundew.” It has a slender stem and tiny, round leaves fringed with hairs that glisten with bright drops of liquid as delicate as fine dew. Woe to the insect, however, that dares to dance on it. Although its attractive clusters of red, white, and pink blossoms are harmless, the leaves are deadly. The shiny moisture on each leaf is sticky and will imprison any bug that touches it. As an insect struggles to free itself, the vibration causes the leaves to close tightly around it. This innocent-looking plant then feeds on its victim.
F. Suggestions:
   1. Identify temptations.
   2. Pray about temptations
   3. Avoid temptations as much as possible
   4. Use your Bible for inspiration.

**CONCLUSION:**

A. When Satan comes, He disguises . . . .
   1. His person.
   2. His purpose.
   3. His tactics.
   4. The pending consequences.
B. Additional Suggestions:
   1. Remain connected to:
2. God’s way is the way out and away from temptation.
3. James 1:12 – “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.”
4. Philippians 4:13 – “I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.”

B. The Bridgeport Proclaimer September 3, 2008 . . . Front page article
   The road to success is not straight.
   There is a Cure called Failure,
   A loop called Confusion,
   Speed Bumps called Friends,
   Caution Lights called Family.
   You will have Flats called Jobs.
   But, if you have a Spare called Determination,
   An engine called Perseverance,
   Insurance called Faith
   A driver called Jesus,
   You will make it to a place called success.”

C. God’s Plan for Man’s Salvation

Illustrations:
• Young men at Freed-Hardeman . . . drinking . . . Dean of Students
• Rape case in West Tennessee