

Fr. Perozich comments —

I share this because it reinforces what I already know about temptation, redemption, and living for God, and offered me some new facts such as the words to the Westminster chimes which are a prayer to be said as the bells are rung.

Easter celebrates the victory over sin won by Jesus. Now we faithful have to fight the battles against temptation with Jesus' help so that we too be victorious with Him.

A post-Easter meditation on temptation

By [Jerry Newcombe](#)

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Having just celebrated Good Friday and Easter, Christians are reminded again of the terrible price Jesus paid, as the punishment for *our* sins was poured on Him. **By His death and resurrection, He breaks the power of sin in our lives. He forgives us, but He also gives us His Holy Spirit so we can live for Him.**

Jesus wasn't just some great hero we should pattern our lives after—although that's true too. **He is, above all, the Redeemer of those who put their faith in Him.**

The Redeemer from what? From our sin, from the penalty of our sin, and from the power of sin. Of course, **until we die, temptation to sin is ever with us, but by His grace we can be empowered to resist it. Giving in to temptation leads to further defeat, just as victory over temptation leads to greater victory over sin in general.**

Founding father Benjamin Franklin [wrote](#) a great book of timeless advice called *Poor Richard's Almanack*. He has some great points to consider on temptation:

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- “Samson with his strong body, had a weak head, or he would not have laid in a harlot's lap.”
- “He that lies down with dogs, shall rise up with fleas.”
- **“Tis easier to suppress the first desire, than to satisfy all that follow it.”**

This last maxim is terrific. If you give in to temptation again and again, it defeats you. But through Christ’s help, we can say no.

The bells of Christendom chime out all over the land—from Big Ben in London to college campuses in America, and to local churches. These familiar “Westminster Chimes,” which sound every half hour, actually toll out a prayer which in effect says to God that we need His help, even this hour, so we don’t give in to temptation.

The words applied to what the bells chime out are: **“Lord, though this hour, Be Thou our Guide, So by Thy power, No foot shall slide.”**

There’s a fascinating story about a friend of St. Augustine in ancient Rome from which we can learn a lot about **dealing with temptation. It reminds us to not fool ourselves that we won’t give in if we dabble with it.**

Although the ghastly gladiatorial contests—where slave was forced to fight slave unto death—were officially ended during the days of Constantine (died AD 337), they eventually began to crop up again because of the demand. The bloody games were very much alive at the end of the 4th century AD when St. Augustine wrote his classic book, *The Confessions*. He describes an incident in the life of a friend, Alypius, who thought he could dabble with sin without giving in to it. He could not.

One day, Alypius’ “friends” and “fellow students” happened to come across him as they were on their way into the

amphitheater—“on a day for these cruel and deadly games.” And they were determined to have him join them.

Augustine writes, “he strongly objected and resisted them, but they dragged him with friendly force into the amphitheater.

All the while he was saying: ‘Even if you drag my body into this place, can you fasten my mind and my eyes on such shows? I will be absent, though present, and thus I will overcome both you and them.’”

Despite his objections, he went with them inside the auditorium, and he determined he would just close his eyes and ears to the bloodshed. He was strong enough, he assumed, to withstand the temptation to glory in the human butchery.

Augustine says of Alypius, “He closed his eyes and forbade his mind to have any part in such evil sights.” But the roar of the crowd piqued his curiosity. Alypius opened his eyes and drank it all in—willingly.

Augustine adds these details, “As though he were well prepared to despise the sight and to overcome it, whatever it might be, **he opened his eyes and was wounded more deeply in his soul** than the man whom he desired to look at was in his body. He fell more miserably than did that gladiator at whose fall the shout was raised.... He was no longer the man who entered there, but only one of the crowd that he had joined, and a true comrade of those who brought him there.”

Soon Alypius became a big fan of these gladiator fights and even brought others to watch. Perhaps to justify his enthusiasm. Later, Augustine says, God did deliver Alypius from this sin.

If we play with fire, we will get burned.

As a friend reminded me: “***Why* do we resist sin? Because it’s *death*—and because it’s so odious to God that it put His Son on the cross.**” This is a lesson for Easter time and for all year round.

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