Bible Study for Small Groups on Sept. 14.

How do you get rid of sin that, if you are honest, you (at least your flesh) currently loves? Maybe you are stuck in a cycle of failure. At the same time… "the flesh lusts against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh." You feel this tension. You love your sin, but at the same time you hate it. How do you stop the cycle of temptation, being gripped by that temptation, giving in to that temptation (sin), and then the guilt and shame that follows?

Question from one of you: "How to protect oneself from temptation."

Get a notebook or a piece of paper to write on. Use the Study guide below to personally meditate on God's Word and to prepare you to minister to those in your small group this week. Don't feel like you must complete this whole study in one sitting.

1. Use the "General Guidelines for your study" and the "General Questions to ask during your study" for all of the passages.
2. Use the specific questions under each passage to find answers to our topic: "How to protect oneself from temptation."
3. Small group leaders, start discussion with the general question, but focus discussion on the application of the specific questions.
4. I encourage you to use Study Bibles or even commentaries to help you correctly interpret these passages.

General Guidelines for your study:

1. Write the main (central) idea of the passage.
2. Write a one- to two-sentence summary of what you read.
3. Find two attributes of God that the passage is teaching.
4. Write two things you observe.
5. Write two questions you have about what you've read.

General Questions to ask during your study:

How does this passage minister to us today?

Is there a sin to confess?
Is there cause for thanksgiving or praise to God?
Is there a promise or truth to trust in?
Is there an attitude to change or a motive to examine?
Is there a command to obey or an example to imitate?
Is there an error to confront or avoid?

James 1:12-18

1. What is temptation?
2. Is temptation sin (vs. 14-15)? Why is the answer to that questions important for us?
3. Think about it: Why should we even care about protecting ourselves from temptation?
4. Where does temptation come from? and where does it not come from?
5. What are some principles we can use from this text to protect ourselves from temptation (Don't forget verses 16-18!)?
6. What must change about your thinking to protect yourself from temptation?

I Cor. 10:1-13

1. Why do you think God talks about the Israelites in the wilderness before He talks about temptation?
2. What are some things we can learn from the Israelites to protect ourselves from temptation?
3. How does the phrase "there hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man" encourage you?
4. How does God limit temptation in your life according to verse 13?
5. What are some principles we can use from this text to protect ourselves from temptation?

Matthew 4:1-12

1. What is Jesus' main weapon against temptation?
2. Practically, how must you use the same weapon against temptation in your life?

Matthew 5:27-30 and Romans 13:14

1. What point is Jesus making in Matthew 5 with FIGURATIVE (not literal) amputation of spiritual stumbling blocks?
2. Put it in your own words. What is Paul saying when he says, "Make no provision for the flesh to satisfy the lusts thereof?"
3. What are some practical ways for you to avoid temptation?