

Sat. July 20, 2019 – Kev’s guys eGroup Sermon Notes
Ballantyne Campus broadcasting at the Lake Norman Campus
Sermon Title: The Way of Escape (also shared during YouthX 2019)
Pastor Steven Furtick
You Tube Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PcH5K0hLEiA>

Elevation Worship:

God of the Promise: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G26HDdgCyGw>

I Raise a Halleluiah: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G2XtRuPfaAU>

Scripture:

- **1 Cor 10: 13:** *12 So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don’t fall! 13 No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.*
- **1 Cor 10: 1-5:** *Warnings From Israel’s History - 10 For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. 2 They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. 3 They all ate the same spiritual food 4 and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ. 5 Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them; their bodies were scattered in the wilderness. 6 Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did. 7 Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written: “The people sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in revelry.” 8 We should not commit sexual immorality, as some of them did—and in one day twenty-three thousand of them died. 9 We should not test Christ, as some of them did—and were killed by snakes. 10 And do not grumble, as some of them did—and were killed by the destroying angel.*
- **1 John 2: 15 and 16:** *On Not Loving the World - 15 Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them. 16 **For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life**—comes not from the Father but from the world. 17 The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever.*
- **Mathew 4: 1-4:** *Jesus Is Tested in the Wilderness - 4 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted[a] by the devil. 2 After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. 3 The tempter came to him and said, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.” 4 Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’” 5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. 6 “If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down. For it is written: “He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.” 7 Jesus answered him, “It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’” 8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. 9 “All this I will give you,” he said, “if you will bow down and worship me.” 10 Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’” 11 Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.*
- **Mathew 3:13 to 17:** *The Baptism of Jesus: 13 Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. 14 But John tried to deter him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you*

come to me?" 15 Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness." Then John consented. 16 As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. 17 And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."

- *John 1 New International Version (NIV): The Word Became Flesh: 1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning. 3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. 4 In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome[a] it. 6 There was a man sent from God whose name was John. 7 He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. 8 He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. 9 The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. 10 He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. 11 He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. 12 Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— 13 children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. 14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

Sermon Notes – "The Way of Escape" by Pastor Steven Furtick

- Opening comments: "Give God the praise that He deserves. I wonder what God would do in our lives today if we just got out of the way and let Him bless us like he wants to – and let Him speak to us like He wants to. If you notice some special Holy Ghost fire to my right today - it is our eFamily visiting for the weekend - visiting from all over the US and from five countries – during our eFamily reunion weekend. It is important that we recognize them today – because they don't just consume on-line – they give, they serve, and they pray in support of this ministry. Consider Carrie in the audience today - she is from a military family - and her online eFamily is a very important part of her life."
- Opening prayer: "God this is your word. This is your people - so I asked that nothing come between Your word and Your people - give us the faith to receive it - help us to open our hearts - help us to plumb to the depths and get past the surface of things - don't let this seed get snatched by a bird or choked by a weed or scorched by the sun - we are on good ground today - and let our hearts understand this - somebody from India came to hear this word and somebody came from Waxhaw-NC (local town) to hear this word. Bless each & every one of them in Jesus name. Amen."
- See 1 Cor 10:13. As I shared what the high school students last night - this is a scripture that I want to believe - that I hope is true – and that I would love to say that I always experience this - the fact of the matter is that some of the things that we come across in the Bible seem to be hard to believe because they run counter to our experiences in life - and as I read the Scripture today and we talk about it together - this might hit a tender spot for some of you - that's okay because we can trust God as to where He applies the pressure. This is a surgical incision by the apostle Paul dealing with the church in Corinth - where he says that no temptation has overtaken you - and we are not to be tempted beyond our ability. God will not let the temptation to exceed our ability to withstand it - and along with the temptation, God will provide a way of escape.
- I want to speak to you today about "The Way of Escape."

- I told high school kids yesterday how intimidating it is to preach about temptation - because things have changed so much since I was their age. They are now facing more temptations than those of us over 30 ever had to deal with. And yet in the text that I just read you - **The apostle Paul makes a staggering claim – that there is no such thing as a new temptation. There’s no temptation that you are dealing within your life (right now) that is any different (that might be in a different form - but no different in substance) then the temptations that have been pulling people down - holding people back - and tearing people apart - since people have been people.**
- And I recognize that the temptations in 2019 have a little bit different flavor than they did in 1999 or 1979 or 1959 or 1939.
- **How many agree that temptation is not generational? Temptation is universal.**
- **Here is the part of the verse that gets my attention - no temptation has overtaken you that is uncommon to all people. There is freedom in the statement - some of us might think that we are the only ones that struggle with certain things - yet there might be someone on the same row tonight that is struggling with the same temptation that you are.**
- The temptations are really the same.
- **And the only thing that has changed regarding temptation is the delivery system.**
- **And we really need to engage here - in order to get the full revelation.**
- Has God ever brought you out of anything? Debt? The hospital room? Depression?
- Today’s message is not for anyone that has never fell in a pit.
- Has the grace of God ever picked you up in heady stand tall on your feet again – where a shepherd was made available to you to get you through the valley – “and built the table in the presence of my enemies.”
- So, the first thing Paul tells us is there is no temptation that is uncommon to man.
- **There are different manifestations of this temptation - some people are tempted to deal with their problems of temptation through manipulation - some are tempted to deal with their problems through medication - and everyone here has a way of escape.**
- I like to think about this phrase the way of escape.
- Paul was trying to correct the Church of Corinth that was out of control - like having sex in the church and getting drunk on communion wine.
- **We all face the same temptation & and we all need the same grace.**
- Because anyone that has ever heard me preach knows that sometime in their life - knows what it feels like to be trapped - trapped in a pattern of behavior that held you hostage to habits - that has forced you to live in a lower level of yourself - and not coexist as a new creation in Christ.
- This could be a family situation that is pummeling you internally - or situation at your place of employment - or situation that you got yourself into - and now you need a way out from the consequences of a decision that you made years ago.
- This is nothing new - God’s people always need a way out.
- It is the same old story that retells itself time and time again.
- **There is no new temptation and there is no new grace.**
- See: 1 Cor 10:1-5.
- **It’s easy to think while you’re in the thick of it to think that it’s God’s grace is for everyone but you. Where you think that the delivery of grace is for everyone but you - in that freedom is for**

everyone but you - and Paul tries to explain this by backing all the way up to the Israelites coming out of Egypt – and the lengths that God will go through to set his people free.

- And God will not stop fighting for you until you are free.
- Paul is getting his people to see that when Israel was enslaved in Egypt - it was the same God that brought them out of Egypt – is the same God that is trying to get you out of bondage. This the same God that drove back the waters until the hundreds of thousands of Hebrews safely made it to shore – and then sent waters back together when the enemies were in a position to be drowned in the midst of the Red Sea.
- **This same grace and miracle working power is within you - for whatever situation - for whatever temptation - for whatever weakness - whatever deficit - there is nothing in front of you that God does not have the power to make stand up on its ends and take you safely through to the other side.**
- **Permit me to say it more accurately: God didn't bring the Israelites out - he brought them through.**
- **There's a difference. It is nuanced but is different.**
- In order for God to bring them out they had to walk toward something - in order for God to bring about change - he had to take them through.
- **And a lot of the problems fighting temptation come from the fact that we expect God to bring us out - and while we're looking for an airlift - God is paving a highway.**
- And God says I'm not going to lift you out - but I will bring you through.
- No temptation has overtaken you that is uncommon to man.
- This is certainly a good argument to say that there are temptations that we have to deal with today that the apostle Paul did not have to deal with - because the apostle Paul did not have Apple products – and the apostle Paul didn't have road rage – and the apostle Paul didn't have a wife 😊. Humorous moment: The Bible says that Jesus was tempted in every way and yet was without sin - we also know that Jesus did not have children. How is this?
- Jesus was tempted in every way and yet was without sin - yet he was not confronted with prescription drug abuse or road rage or social media onslaught or 24-hour news cycles that make us lose our minds.
- But then I realized this: **What the Bible is saying is that temptation is always the same - however the way it shows up in your life is unique.**
- In fact, there are only three temptations. See 1 John 2: 15 and 16: (You beat these three – and you are home free - and you'll be just like Jesus).
 - The lust of the flesh: What I feel.
 - The lust of the eyes: Responding to what I see and only living by my senses rather than the spirit.
 - The pride of life: where I respond in such a way as to say I don't need God or anybody else. I'm free to be me - however this is not real freedom.
- It's interesting that God brought the Hebrew people out of Egypt - yet as we read in Genesis - God was the one that brought them into Egypt in the first place. Recall the story of Joseph. Out of respect for pharaohs appreciation for Joseph the Israelites were treated favorably. However, after a new Pharaoh came into power, the Israelites were enslaved and oppressed - where the place that they escaped to now became their place of enslavement.

- I point this out because **sometimes in your life - you go to a place of retreat to survive that eventually you become enslaved in. And now you're looking for a way out. We learn survival tactics in our life - because we feel trapped in certain situations - even inside of ourselves - and even very young we learn ways to escape - what teenager does not need a way of escape?**
- For some, escapes are so innocent at first - take loneliness for example - where we escape to a new situation that results enslavement - and this happens in the realm of sex more often than you think.
- **A lot of times the expression of sexuality is typically a manifestation of loneliness or a feeling of worthlessness - if you let the world tell you that your worthless - that you're nothing - that you are nobody – sex might make you feel better for a little while - where you can escape the feeling of worthlessness through the pleasure of sex - until you arrive at a point when you realize you cannot have enough sex to make you feel truly in love - and you can't put enough of the wrong stuff in to fill the whole that only Christ can repair.**
- But you didn't know that "when you went to Egypt" – you did not know that when you started the pattern - when you started the behavior – and had you known that a situation was going to enslave you - you would not have escaped to it.
- However, that's not how things work - **temptation first appears as a way of escape - what you don't see at first is that chains that bind you up - to a broken place.**
- Some of the ways we learn to escape is because we had to - were going through so much - we did not know how else to deal with it - this is why we started drinking too much - this is why we filled the prescription a couple different ways - it was an escape - and it worked for a little while.
- Humorous statement: One of these days - when I have the guts to do it – I will preach a whole series called "sins with benefits" – yes Pastor the wages of sin is death – However, we don't have to pay right away.
- **If there were no benefits of sin, why are we so good at?**
- **It's a way of escape - it's a tunnel - and sometimes you remember stuff - and deal with stuff – and you bury stuff - and the enemy will present a way of escape.**
- **In every temptation that you face in your life (lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life) - the isolation that tells you - yeah I can do this on my own - the way that we see things on the surface level and not as the real questions -like responding like an animal to the sexual impulses of your body and your mind - all of this is a way of escape. And it's nothing new. It was there in the church of Corinth. It is it was with the Israelites when they were enslaved in Egypt.**
- The same grace in the Old Testament is in the New Testament.
- We need the same grace because we experience the same temptations.
- It's just different looking versions of it.
- It comes from different angles but it's the same temptation.
- Some of the stuff you are struggling with at 46 you were struggling with at the age of 14.
- It just dresses different now.
- You just learned how to dress it to make it more socially acceptable.
- You just learned how to hide it better now.
- But at the same stuff -same condition.
- Consider the Israelites escape from Egypt to the promised land: They did not make it. They did not make it to the land of milk & honey. They did not make it to peace and they did not make it to joy - and they did not make it to real freedom - because they were overthrown in the wilderness – and in

the wilderness we feel trapped – where you can start worrying – where you can't let go of what happened – where you can't detach from the past – where you can't recover from the mistake – and the wilderness does not have to be physical - it doesn't have to be a camping trip for it to be wilderness - you can be in the wilderness at a mega church or in an air-conditioned house - you can be in the wilderness in a marriage that looks fine from the outside - you can be in the wilderness wearing a nice polo shirt and \$175 haircut. It's about a state of mind of feeling trapped.

- The same temptations that confronted the Israelites in the wilderness are the same temptations that we face today - just a different manifestation. For the Israelites their temptation was physical. Sometimes temptation is emotional - like scrolling on our phone for five minutes and then feeling bad about ourselves - however we can't stop because we would rather be anywhere than here.
- Follow the misguided logic here: I would rather follow the lives of people that I stop being friends with - and check-in on them - versus dealing with the real drama in my life. The only problem is that what you escape to - you might become enslaved by - and you might find yourself where you can't be present anywhere - and can't do anything - because you just learn to numb stuff - rather than to deal with self - and stand still rather than go through it.
- And according to history many of the Israelites died in the wilderness - after God brought them through the waters of Egypt.
- The temptation that we are facing is nothing new.
- See Mathew 4: 1-4. Now this scripture is just weird. It says that that the Holy Spirit had the devil tempt Jesus. Just before this, we see that the Holy Spirit was present while Jesus was baptized - the spirit came like a dove (according to the gospel of John). So ,the spirit is looking like a dove - and then the dove flew off - and then the Spirit "drove" (modern translation) Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.
- Now I understand how the Holy Spirit comes to us in the form of a dove - however I am not used to the spirit that will drive someone into temptation - and why would the Spirit do this to Jesus? Don't we even pray the following: "Lead us not into temptation?"
- So why is the Holy Spirit leading Jesus into temptation? - unless he's leading him into the same wilderness that the Israelites died in - with the same devil that defeated them - as part of a rematch - to let the devil know - he might've won the first round - but this is a rematch - this is why he went into the wilderness - Jesus had to settle the score - he had to fight the fight that you and I could not win - he saw us in our wilderness - he saw us in our weakness - he saw us in our struggle - he saw us in our captivity – and Jesus was tempted. And how exactly how was he tempted? Lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and pride of life. The first thing the devil did was try to take advantage of Jesus's hunger. Because when you are hungry you are susceptible. When you only listen to a sermon every three weeks – only when it's convenient for you, you are susceptible to the devil. If you do not eat a healthy diet, you are susceptible to the Krispy Kreme doughnut. The best thing you can do is not get too hungry.
- Why did Jesus fast for 40 days and 40 nights? To make up for the 40 years that the Israelites were lost in the wilderness. Here God is trying to correct the 40 years of mistakes. And Jesus wants a rematch because while they were weak - I am strong. While the law was powerless, grace overrules everything. See: John 1:14: "14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth."
- **And so, we now understand that Jesus went to the wilderness to fight temptation:**

- Lust of the Flesh: The first temptation was to turn stone into bread. Before you think I how dumb this sounds, think about how many times you have tried to do this in your own life - to try to turn human of approval into true validation. To try to turn material things into lasting satisfaction. But when you're hungry, you will go to Egypt for food – and the same thing that you escaped to will enslave you.
- Lust of the eyes: Jesus is on a high mountain to view all the kingdoms of this world – and is asked to bow down and worship the devil - and all of this will be yours. In other words - compromise and take a shortcut - and take the way of escape versus the burden of the cross - and forget about the cross and go right to the crown - shift your priorities and take a shortcut - and some of you are there right now. It's the lust of the eyes - where it seems right at first - but we know it is not - and this whole thing is a bit crazy since the devil is promising Jesus something that he already has.
- Pride of life: if you are really the son of God, throw yourself off the mountain. Pro tip: don't argue the word of God with the word of God. How did Jesus have the grace to withstand the temptation while being human like we are? And the answer is not found in the wilderness - is found in the water. And remember that before Jesus went to the wilderness, he went to the water. See Matthew chapter 3: 13. And now Jesus (our Joshua) goes down to the same Jordan (with all of its historical significance) - that the Israelites did not crossover for 40 years because of their own fear and insecurity - and is baptized by John. And when he came up out of the water, he was reminded by the voice of the father stating that "you are my son - and I am well pleased with you."
- Jesus got to the wilderness - and the devil says - prove to me that you are the son of God. Jesus then says, I don't have to prove what I just experienced. When you have been to the water - when you have been through the water - when you had your sins washed away - when you experience the word of God for yourself - when you've been through the water - you can survive the wilderness - when you know who you are – and remember where you came from God - and came from a place where there is no limitation - and we come from a place where there is no sin - and we are loved by God and you are given new name.
- Once we have been through the water - we can't die in the wilderness.
- It is important for you to know - that the only way to survive the wilderness is to know where the water is - you've got to know where your water is - you got to know how to worship God during difficult seasons. You have to know where your water is and trust God – not worthless idles.
- And, you have to surround yourself with people of faith when all you have is fear – those that will put their arm around you and say – let me carry you for a bit while you get through this – because you carried him during the last one.
- Your way of escape is not trying harder – your way of escape is not pretending that you do not struggle – For whatever opposes the work of God in your life – there is a name – there is a champion – there is a redeemer – there is a savior.
- Closing Prayer: Thank you Jesus for facing my wilderness. He did for me what I could never do for myself. He made a way through it. It is by grace through faith that we are saved. And God may never anoint me to preach this message in the same away again – but maybe He sent this word to you - in order to make a way of escape. Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom and liberty – and so many of us have been enslaved by thing that we escaped to – it's just the littlest things that keep bring us back to predictable slavery. I believe that God desires to bring someone through the

waters today. There is a physical baptism and there is also a spiritual baptism – the physical one is a one-time event – the spiritual one is a moment-by-moment regeneration by the spirit of God. God has made a way for you and there is no temptation that has overtaken you - that is not uncommon to man – God is faithful – For He cannot deny himself to you – For where there is wilderness, there is grace to make us strong. It is the same grace that it took to get you started in your faith – is the same grace that is available to you in this very moment of your life. Yet, we still struggle in ways that we can't comprehend and can't speak about. So, we start digging tunnels and the tunnels eventually become traps. Why would you escape to something that would ultimately enslave you? Where you escape to is what you become and enslaved by.