

Victory over Temptation

it can be done

Start Here

The largest turtle in the world, found in Latin America, can weigh up to 115 kilos. This turtle uses an interesting method to hunt its prey: it lies motionless on the sea bed with its mouth wide open. The turtle's tongue has pink threads that look like worms moving in the water. Fish see these, and thinking they have found food, move towards the jaws of the turtle, and then, suddenly...SNAP.

Temptation also works like that in our lives. At first, it looks very pleasant and inviting, but eventually it leads to our destruction.

Discuss

Do you have an example of something that was tempting that later caused regret?
What first enticed you?
What caused regret later?

Explore the Word

No one is immune to temptation – all of us face and will continue to face temptations on a daily basis. We are tempted in how we use our money, how we use our time, what we let our eyes watch, what we choose to eat, how we use our words. Around every corner there is bait that lures us towards destruction.

Temptation itself is not sin; even Jesus faced temptation. The key is to learn to handle temptation.

Read Matthew 4:1-11

- Where did the words come from that Jesus used to combat the devil's temptation?

Read Hebrews 2:18

- Who helps you when you are tempted?

Read 1 Corinthians 10:13

- What does this verse teach about the power of temptation over us?

Main Idea

God has made a way for us to overcome temptation. It is possible for each of us to be victorious. In every situation we face, even when temptation feels overwhelmingly strong, God has made a way for us to escape (1 Cor 10:13). When temptation creeps up on us, we can take action by the power of the Holy Spirit.

- **Bring it into the light**

- Immediately bring that temptation to the Father. Instead of hiding, ask your Father for help. (Proverbs 28:13)
- Bring a trusted friend into the conversation. Ask for support and accountability. (James 5:16)
- Follow Jesus' example; shine Scripture on the situation. Remind yourself of the truth that you have learned through the Bible.
- **Run Away!** Running away from temptation is not weak, running away is wise. The earlier and sooner you flee temptation, the easier it will be to overcome it. If something causes temptations, remove it: Put your computer in shared space, clear alcohol from your home, cut up your credit cards, delete apps off your phone. Actively cut yourself off from situations that make sin easy.

Think of three common temptations. What are specific ways to remove ourselves from those temptations?

- **Invest in the good.** Overcoming temptation is not just about resisting evil, it's about choosing good. Starve what you want to kill, feed what you want to grow. (2 Timothy 2:22)
- **Don't give up.** Everyone is on a journey. We all are learning every day to be more like Jesus. When you fail, do not lose heart! Repent quickly and commit to starting again. (1 John 1:9)

Practice Together Now

- Spend a few moments together in the presence of the Holy Spirit and ask what he wants to address in your life this week.
- Tell each other what particular temptation you want to resist this week. In prayer together, confess this before the Father.
- Pick one action you can do this week to remove yourself from temptation's path in this area.
- Pick one action you can do this week to invest in the good.
- Pray together for strength to be humble in accountability and strong in resisting temptation.

Review your Practice Daily

- Read Genesis 39. What do you learn from how Joseph handled repeated temptation?
- Read these verses. Pick one to memorize
 - 1 John 1:9
 - Matthew 26:41
 - Colossians 3:1-2
- When you feel tempted this week (and you will!), immediately walk through the four steps provided.
- With the specific temptation you identified, call your friend daily, simply to check in on this day for resisting temptation and investing in the good.