

So Tempting...

Have any of you ever seen a doorknob out of the door? It's a pretty fascinating piece of hardware. The knobs or handles on either side are just part of this amazing little tool. The two knobs are connected by a bar called a spindle, and that spindle runs perpendicular through a much thicker piece of metal that sticks out the side of the door. This piece is called the latch, and when the door is closed, the latch slides into a hole in the doorframe, which holds the door in place. When you turn the knob or handle, the knob pulls the spindle back into the door, which in turn pulls the latch and allows you to open the door.

Long story short, there is no way you can "accidentally" open the door, is there? If you want to open a door, what do you have to do? You have to put your hand on the knob, turn it, and then open the door. Doors cannot open by accident, and they do not just open by themselves.

Let me ask you another question: How many of you, when confronted with something you did wrong, have ever said, "I didn't mean to" or "It's not my fault" or "It was an accident," when it really wasn't? We live in a culture that doesn't like to take responsibility. People who do bad things like to blame their actions on their parents or friends or unfortunate circumstances.

But what did we learn from the doorknob? There are no "accidents" when it comes to making choices. We make the choice either to open a door or not to. It's no different with sin. Sin is an intentional act that we choose to do or not do. There are no accidents, no excuses.

No one can force you to sin. Either you give in to temptation and open the door or you listen to the Holy Spirit and resist temptation. Do not merely resist, but flee from that door and never go near it again. It's your choice, and only you can decide what to do.

But what does it mean to be tempted by something? Temptation is wanting to do something that we know is wrong. Temptation all by itself isn't sinful. It's what we do when we're tempted that matters. When we are faced with the choice of doing something wrong or right. Sometimes it's really hard to walk away from something we want (even if it's something we shouldn't have.) But when we give in to temptation that leads us into sin.

When's the last time you were tempted to do something bad? Like watching a TV show you're not supposed to watch? Or taking a snack your parents told you not to eat? Temptation happens all the time, in many different ways. Some things are small - like eating a piece of candy when you're not supposed to. Some things are big - like

cheating on a test. Big or small, temptation is everywhere and we have to work extra hard to not give in to those bad decisions.

Let me explain in more detail. There was a bowl of candy sitting on the coffee table in the living room of Mary's house. Mary's mother noticed that she was looking at the candy and said, "Now, don't you eat any candy until after dinner or you will spoil your appetite." The candy looked so good and the temptation was so great. "Surely just one little piece won't hurt — and mother will never know the difference," Mary thought to herself.

Here is another story which might sound familiar.

"Put away your books and take out one sheet of paper and a pencil," the teacher said. "We are going to take our weekly spelling test." Johnny had an empty feeling in the pit of his stomach. He knew that they were going to have a spelling test today, but he watched TV last night instead of studying for the spelling test and he wasn't ready for the test. As the test began, Johnny looked around the room and realized that he had a clear view of Sally's paper. "It won't hurt if I look at Sally's paper just this once," Johnny thought to himself. "I promise — I'll never do it again and nobody will ever know." All of us have faced temptations such as these, haven't we?

The Bible says that kids don't have to just give in to temptation. God is there to help! Did you know that Jesus was tempted? He was!

The Bible tells us that Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit into the desert where he was tempted by the devil for forty days. Do you know what Jesus did when the devil tempted him? He answered him with Scripture!

Jesus had not had anything to eat for forty days. He was hungry, and Satan knew he was hungry, so he said to him, "If you are really the Son of God, turn these stones into bread."

Jesus could have easily done what Satan suggested, but he didn't. Instead, he answered, "It is written, 'Man does not live by bread alone.'"

Then the devil took Jesus up to a high place and showed him the worldly kingdoms below. "All of this belongs to me," he said. "If you will bow down and worship me, I will give it to you."

Jesus answered, "It is written, 'Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.'" Next, the devil took Jesus to Jerusalem and led him up to the highest point on the temple. He said to Jesus, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here. God will send his angels to rescue you."

Again, Jesus quoted the Scripture, "'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

Do you know what the devil did? He gave up! He said, "I'll come back and try another day."

Jesus faced temptation but He resisted. He stayed strong and relied on His love for God to help him. With His help you can too!

Here are four steps you can take the next time you are tempted:

Step #1: Take Your Thoughts Captive

Did you know that your thoughts don't have to control you? You can control them! Bad actions start with bad thoughts. So grab those bad thoughts, lock them up, and shoot them down!

Step #2: Run Away from Bad Things

It's not enough to just think the right thoughts. If you're in a situation that you know isn't good, get out of that situation. Run away from temptation! For example, if your friends are playing a video game you know you aren't allowed to play, get up and leave the room or just go home. Don't sit there and do nothing. Remove yourself from the bad situation.

Step #3: Chase Better Things

If all you ever do is run away from bad things, you're focusing on the negative. Don't forget to focus on the positive. Fill your life with pursuing better things, like reading your Bible, hanging out with good friends, going to church and obeying your parents.

Step #4: Tell Somebody

Secrets are bad! When you're tempted to do something wrong, you should admit it to a parent or a friend. Letting others know about it will help you to be strong.

Use these tips and your love of God to help you resist. God's word is very powerful. It can act as a shield between us and whatever the Devil tries to throw at us. God has given us His Word so that we might be able to fight off temptation and defeat the Devil. So don't give in to temptation. Stay strong and believe in yourself to make the right choice.





Jesus was tempted
in the desert.

The Temptation of Jesus

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. Luke 4:1-2a (NIV)

The puzzle is based on Luke 4:1-13 (NIV).



H O L Y C T W J Q O F D C T D
 T Y C E L R Z N O F G V I L Y
 E E O M W S W E Q R V T I Y F
 M V M Y C T O S T M D V N M G
 P A M P V O R P F A E A E X P
 T B A B L N L I E D W L N I A
 E L N G H E D R X L A M H I U
 D C D D A M B I H S A S X G T
 L U I M N Z K T U U R L N E H
 F I A W G Z J R B O N U Q T O
 W P V B E F E U W Y X G R H R
 G C L E L J D C W H Z E R N I
 Q X I A S U T A H X S X G Y T
 P X M F O R T Y Y E E X U Q Y
 K I N G D O M S D S P E N Z Y

SPIRIT	DEVIL	DAYS	JORDAN	STONE
HOLY	LIVE	ANGELS	AUTHORITY	WORSHIP
DESERT	TEMPLE	COMMAND	BREAD	WORLD
TEMPTED	FORTY	KINGDOMS	JERUSALEM	HUNGRY

