Study 4: Resisting Temptation

Read: Genesis 39
Memory Verse: 1 Corinthians 10:13

The Big Idea

We can resist temptation by choosing to honor God, even when doing the right thing is difficult or costly.

Start Here

Let's be honest: temptation is something everyone experiences.

Sometimes temptation comes through our friends. Sometimes it comes through social media, relationships, entertainment, or our own desires. Sometimes we know something is wrong, but that doesn't necessarily make it easier to walk away from it.

Even people in the Bible struggled with temptation. Abraham struggled with fear and dishonesty. David gave in to sexual temptation. Paul wrestled with pride. And even Jesus experienced temptation.

The question isn't whether we will face temptation. The question is **what will we do when it comes?**

In Genesis 39, we see Joseph face a difficult temptation. His response gives us some important lessons about how we can remain faithful to God.

Read Genesis 39

Joseph had been sold into slavery by his own brothers and eventually became a servant in the household of an Egyptian official named Potiphar.

Despite his circumstances, Joseph remained faithful to God. God blessed Joseph, and he eventually became responsible for managing Potiphar's entire household.

But Joseph soon faced a difficult situation. Potiphar's wife repeatedly tried to persuade Joseph to sleep with her. Joseph could have given in. He could have justified his actions or convinced himself that nobody would find out. Instead, Joseph refused.

In Genesis 39:9, Joseph explains that giving in would be a sin against God. He understood that his decisions were ultimately about more than just himself or the people around him. They were about honoring God.

Eventually, Joseph ran away from the situation, leaving his cloak behind. His decision to obey God actually resulted in him being falsely accused and thrown into prison. Think about that.

Joseph did the right thing, and things got worse for him.

But Joseph remained faithful, and God continued to be with him.

Talk About It

1. What stands out to you about the way Joseph responded to temptation? What could he have done differently?

2. What are some temptations teenagers face today? Why can those temptations sometimes be difficult to walk away from?

3. Have you ever experienced a situation where doing the right thing came with a cost? How can Joseph's example encourage you to remain faithful?

Live It Out

One of the most important things we can learn from Joseph is that sometimes the best way to overcome temptation is to get away from it. Joseph didn't stand around trying to see how close he could get to sin without actually giving in. He ran. That's an important lesson for us.

If you struggle with certain content online, maybe you need to unfollow certain accounts or put boundaries on your phone.

If certain friendships continually encourage you to make bad decisions, maybe you need to rethink the influence those friendships have on you.

If you struggle with a particular situation, maybe you need to stop putting yourself in that situation.

Don't just ask God to help you resist temptation. Be willing to take steps to get away from it.

Take a few minutes and answer this question:

"What is one area of temptation in my life where I need to make a change?"

Parents, this is a great opportunity to be honest about your own struggles, too. Your teenager needs to understand that temptation doesn't disappear when we become adults. We all need God's help.

Pray Together

Memory Verse

1 Corinthians 10:13

"No temptation has come upon you except what is common to humanity. But God is faithful; he will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to bear it."