

<p>Think It Over</p> <p>Going Deeper</p>	<p>Going Deeper Beyond Sunday</p> <p>Everyday Temptation</p> <p>5-31-20</p>
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If you would like to extend this over a week, you can easily do one of the points each day in your devotion.

Matthew 6:13 "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." (KJV)

1 Corinthians 10:13 "The temptations that come into your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will keep the temptation from becoming so strong you that can't stand up against it. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you will not give in to it." (NLT)

Do you start your day with great intentions, thinking 'today is going to be different,' but then fall back into old bad habits and disappoint both yourself and God? Why do we keep making the same mistakes over and over, and do things we know are bad for us? The reality is that good intentions are never good enough. To break free from our temptations and hang-ups we need more than good intentions. It's a mistake to think that most temptations are attractions to really big evil activities such as stealing or murder. In fact, temptations are simply choices between doing what is right or wrong, and most temptations are more subtle than we think. Examples are 'doing what's easy,' 'doing what is best for me,' 'spending time doing things that are unimportant,' 'doing something right for the wrong reason,' or simply 'doing nothing at all.' God doesn't want us to live this way. In this discussion we'll see that the solution is in the "Prayer of Deliverance" that leads to the "way out" described above in 1 Corinthians 10:13.

OPEN WITH A PRAYER. THIS IS ONLY A GUIDE – SELECT THE POINTS YOU WANT TO MEDITATE ON.

HOW TO BREAK THROUGH THE TEMPTATIONS OF LIFE TO THE PATH OF ESCAPE

1. IDENTIFY WHAT MAKES ME VULNERABLE.

According to Matthew 26:41, why should we watch and pray?

- Why isn't just watching or just praying enough by itself?
- Describe what being vulnerable is and how it relates to temptation.
- Why is one person tempted by something when another person is not?

As Christ followers we are called to grow in our maturity through God's Word. Temptation is around us every day. Take a moment to check on your growth in this area of your life. God wants to assist us with temptation but we must actively identify our responsibility in the process. Discuss with a friend the following questions: When am I most tempted? Where am I most tempted? Who is with me when I'm most tempted? What temporary benefit do I get if I give in? How do I feel right before I'm tempted?

2. PLAN TO AVOID IT.

Read Proverbs 4:26-27. What are some ways to avoid evil according to this verse?

- What are some examples of situations where someone else could have avoided temptation with pre-planning?
- Describe ways that Satan gets a foothold in seemingly harmless actions?
- How have you seen someone support another person to help that person plan to avoid evil?
- What role does denial play in failing to avoid evil?

When we triumph over temptation we are a living example of the Holy Spirit working through us. Even Jesus was tempted. The key is how we deal with temptation by planning ahead. Describe a plan to deal with one distraction on your path that leads you to sin.

3. I MUST GUARD MY HEART.

What does Proverbs 4:23 say we should do above all else?

- What does it mean to “guard your heart?”
- Why do we tend to think temptation is external rather than internal?

What should we not give into the devil, according to Ephesians 4:27?

- What are some examples of giving the devil a foothold?

When we are not in a healthy internal state, we can allow a desire inside us to be filled by an outside temptation. Rate yourself from 0-4 on each of the following 10 scales below. Use this as a tool to identify areas where you are vulnerable to temptation.

Physically exhausted	0 1 2 3 4	Energetic and in shape
Discouraged/pessimistic	0 1 2 3 4	Encouraged and hopeful
Bored/discontented	0 1 2 3 4	Challenged and contented
Spiritually dry/empty	0 1 2 3 4	Spiritually alive and growing
Alone/distant from others	0 1 2 3 4	Close to those you love
Insecure or unsure	0 1 2 3 4	Confident and secure
Wounded or deeply hurt	0 1 2 3 4	Loved and understood
Bitter or angry	0 1 2 3 4	Forgiven everyone
Sad	0 1 2 3 4	Happy
Like you've failed	0 1 2 3 4	Successful

4. PRAY FOR DELIVERENCE.

What does Psalm 50:15 say we should we do when we are troubled?

- Why do we forget to call upon God?
- Why do we think we don't need God's help in our troubles?
- Why do we sometimes forget to honor God when delivered from a trouble?
- What is our role after calling upon God?

Read Hebrews 4:15. Which of our temptations did Jesus face?

- Name some temptations we sometimes think (incorrectly) Jesus didn't face.

How should we come to God and what will we receive, according to Hebrews 4:16?

- Why do we think God will scold us when we are tempted?
- Is a temptation a sin?
- Why can we expect God's help when we pray for his help?

The least sin is worse than the worst temptation. Think back to your worst temptations and describe how God provided help. Whether we choose to use his help or not, count and praise each time we recognize God's help.

5. TURN MY ATTENTION ELSEWHERE.

What does thinking about or meditating on God's commands prevent, according to Psalm 119:6?

- Why would *refocusing* be better than *resisting* temptations?
- What are examples of both good and bad things we focus on that influence our behavior throughout the day?

As we capture our thoughts, what does 2 Corinthians 10:5 instruct us to do with them?

- What are some examples of capturing thoughts and turning them to Christ?

According to Romans 12:21, how do we conquer evil?

- How do we typically conquer evil things in our lives?
- Why aren't we more active in conquering evil?
- What are some practical ways of conquering evil?

Anything you focus on will pull you in that direction. This week, focus on God's kingdom first and the people around you who have not yet heard about Jesus' gift of salvation. Perhaps you know someone who is struggling with a temptation or sin you once struggled with and conquered. Be prayerful and ready to share with that person how Christ and other Christians helped you overcome that sin.

6. GET A GROUP AND A PARTNER.

According to Ecclesiastes 4:9-10, why are two better than one?

- Why do people insist on relying only on themselves, even when they have been struggling with issues for a long time?
- Why is it nearly impossible to break through temptation on our own?
- What concerns do we have about asking other people for help?

How does Galatians 6:1-2 instruct us to go to a person who has done something wrong?

- What are typical ways we approach or confront a brother or sister when we find they did something wrong?
- How can we help others overcome their temptations?

In James 5:19-20, what are we to do when we know people have wandered off from God's truth?

- What are our some common attitudes we have towards those we know have wandered from God's truth?
- Why are we attracted to people who are honest and authentic?
- Whom do people often turn to when faced with temptation?

How serious are you about breaking a long time habit or sin where you have not yet been successful? If you have not already done so, find a group as well as a trustworthy and encouraging partner to keep you accountable for the changes you want to make. If we confess our temptations to our partners, we will spend less time confessing our sins, so utilize your accountability partner to successfully defeat a sin in your life you want God to help conquer.

PERSONAL APPLICATION AND COMMITMENT:

How seriously interested are you about breaking free from your temptations? God knows your habits and temptations, including the temptations you'll face in the future, and can give you the strength to avoid them. The path of escape we discussed here contains six steps. How are you going to apply them into your life?