

Your Plan to Avoid Temptation

No one plans on making a poor in-the-moment decision, then hiding it, then lying about it, then losing trust with the people they love the most. No one plans to mess up their lives. The problem is they don't plan not to—so they weren't prepared when temptation knocked.

Have you been there? I'm guessing you have. Whether it's eating unhealthy foods, overspending on unnecessary stuff, or giving in to addictive behaviors, we often find ourselves struggling to make choices that reflect our faith in Christ.

So what do we do? We don't give in and we don't hope we can fight it in the moment. Instead, we pre-decide to avoid temptation.

With God's help, you can make up your mind ahead of time to stay as far away as possible from what will hurt you and others.

Are you ready to pre-decide to be ready when temptation strikes? If so, I've prepared three steps you can use to avoid and resist temptation today.

Step 1: Expect to Be Tempted

Imagine you found out there was a wild grizzly bear in your neighborhood. How would you react? Would you go for a walk outside or let your kids play in the yard? Probably not. Instead, you would take steps to keep yourself and your loved ones safe.

In the book of Genesis, God says the temptation to sin is like a wild animal, ready to attack the second we open the door (Genesis 4:7). So while we're not called to live in fear of temptation, we are called to live with an awareness of temptation.

Jesus said, "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." Matthew 26:41

So we remain alert, prayerfully expecting temptation to come knocking at any moment.

Use the space below to consider where and when you've been tempted in the past. This exercise will give you insights about where you might be tempted again in the future.

Step 2: Declare War Against Temptation

Following Jesus doesn't guarantee the absence of temptation; it's a declaration of war against temptation. And how do we declare war? By committing to a healthy, personalized plan to avoid temptation.

All of us experience temptation in different ways. I'm tempted to do things that you probably have no problem avoiding, and the opposite is likely true, too. So there's not a one-size-fits-all plan to avoid temptation. With that being said, there are a few questions anyone can ask themselves to begin creating their plan to resist temptation:

1. What are some ways I'm tempted to sin?
2. Where are the places I experience temptation?
3. When in the day do I most often give in to temptation?
4. Who am I around when I give in to temptation?

By asking these questions, you can begin to identify some patterns that help you create a plan.

For example, you might realize you're tempted when you stay up too late, so your plan includes going to bed earlier. Or you might recognize that you're often tempted around certain people, so you set boundaries in your relationships.

Remember, this is war. As a follower of Jesus, we seek to represent Christ to the world. Sin wants to keep you from your calling. **So we *don't* look for ways to get as close to sin as possible without crossing the line.** We avoid it, we run from it, and we make a plan to resist it.

Use this space to write down some thoughts to the questions above. Then write down how you'll pre-decide to avoid those temptations when they come up again.

3. Rest in God's Power

The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure. 1 Corinthians 10:13 NLT

We expect to be tempted, so we make a plan to avoid temptation. But what happens when temptation catches us by surprise? We rest in God's power.

Temptation can be like a raging river. It can feel powerful and inescapable. But God always offers us a rope to rescue us.

For you, the rope might look like a moment of clarity before making a poor choice. Or it could look like a timely text message from a friend. Every situation is different, but God always offers a way to resist temptation. We just need to take hold of the rope.

God gives us free will, so He rarely forces us out of temptation. Instead, we must be aware of the opportunities God offers us to escape temptation and choose to accept His gift of freedom.

A Prayer for Temptation

Dear God, You are my strength and my refuge. I want to honor You with every choice I make. So when I'm tempted, point me toward an escape route. And please help me create a plan to avoid temptation. I know You stand with me, so I don't face temptation alone. Through Your power, I can confidently resist sin. In Jesus' name, amen.

You Can Resist Temptation

Because of Jesus, you have what it takes to resist temptation. So pre-decide to be ready today. If you fail, don't give up. Lean in to God's grace and try again. And don't hesitate to reach out to a friend or pastor for help.

For more on resisting temptation, watch this message: www.go2.lc/resist

Download [these phone wallpapers](#) to help you guard against temptation wherever you are.