

Lesson 10 / August 9, 2009

Tempted to Sin

for use as

STEP 1

Lesson 10

Focus:

The wise person avoids the trap of sin.

Lesson 10

Bible Basis:

Proverbs 6:16–28





Students will talk about ways we are lured into the snares of sin, and make a plan of escape using biblical counsel.

OPENING ACTIVITY: *What Lures You?*

The chocolate chip cookies are in the pantry. You're trying not to think about them, but they keep calling to you. What will you do? Eating cookies is not a sin, but what if you can't stop eating them? We tell ourselves we'll just have one or two. We tell ourselves if we have our toe just on this side of the line, it is not sin. And then we stand there and stand there, listening to the rationalizing voice of temptation. Our toe may slip over the line and nothing seems to happen. We step in a little farther, and a little more, and before we know it, SNAP! The trap closes, and we're caught.

The Bible describes this process in James 1:13–15: "When tempted, no one should say, 'God is tempting me.' For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death."

Now divide into pairs and discuss what tempts us. Answer as many of the questions as you feel comfortable answering:

-  Since it's our own evil desires that drag us away and entice us, what are some of these desires?
-  It's good to know our weaknesses and vulnerabilities. Are you aware of the things you need to stay far away from? Explain.
-  Sometimes we can be blindsided by weaknesses we didn't know we had. Has this ever happened to you? If so, describe your experience.
-  What are some effective ways you've learned to deal with Satan's enticements and lures?

Lesson 10
Memory Verse

My son, keep your father's commands and do not forsake your mother's teaching. Bind them upon your heart forever; fasten them around your neck.

—Proverbs 6:20–21

OPENING STORY [read it aloud, or make copies and pass it around]:

CAUGHT IN HIS OWN TRAP

A person may wonder what Robert Maldonado, as a child, thought he wanted to be when he grew up. Chances are he wasn't drawing self-portraits of heroin addiction and burglary for his third-grade teacher. It's likely that in his younger years Robert even went through D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education), a police-officer-led series of classroom lessons taught from kindergarten through twelfth grades. It's said to be an effective program for keeping kids off drugs and helping them to make good choices along their way to adulthood.

But there were obviously other factors at work in Robert's life, luring him toward what probably seemed at one time to be a relief from the problems and issues surrounding life. Now a thoroughgoing heroin addict, the 28-year-old New Jersey man was arrested late last month when he was trapped in the pickup truck from which he was trying to steal a tool case valued at about \$600. His plan was to sell the goods to buy heroin to feed his addiction. But the truck-owner's roommate saw Robert breaking into the truck. The roommate quickly alerted a neighbor who called police while he went down to keep Robert from fleeing.

When police arrived, Robert was still trapped in the truck and admitted to his attempted theft and intent to sell the goods to secure drugs. Meanwhile, another neighbor recognized Robert as the man she had seen making off with \$200 worth of CDs and a \$400 car stereo from her Nissan Pathfinder a few days earlier. Robert admitted to this crime as well.

Trapped inside a truck, trapped by his intended victims, and trapped within a heroin addiction: Robert's multilayered entanglement that day was an apt metaphor for a person lured away from a good path by the false promise of something better elsewhere. Satan's bait and switch was at work in the life of a man who probably, as a youngster, was drawing pictures of fire trucks and football players as he dreamed of what he would one day become.

Today, however, Robert Maldonado is being held in Cumberland County Jail in New Jersey on \$72,500 bail.

[Now form small groups, and have your class discuss the following.]

- ▶ You don't have to become a drug addict to be entangled within layers of sinful behavior. Have you ever felt hopelessly ensnared by sin or addicted to something that dominated your life? How is it harming (or how did it harm) you and others? Explain your answers.
- ▶ In Robert's situation, what would a path back to right living look like?

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- ▶ If you have escaped an addiction (e.g., food, alcohol, pornography, television), what did your path to freedom look like? What was the most difficult part of escaping?
- ▶ What have been some of your own reasons or rationalizations for allowing yourself to be lured into some sin?
- ▶ If you were going to put a universal precaution sign or warning over the doorway to that sin, what would it say?
- ▶ How do you keep yourself at a safe distance from temptation?
- ▶ What are some temptations you have been able to resist?
- ▶ To not become entangled in a sin is the best escape plan. In what ways could you help steer others away from Satan's snares?

(When you are finished with the questions, go on to Step 2 in your *Adult Teacher's Guide*, where you read the Scripture and begin to discuss it.)

News Source:
APP.com: "Burglar caught raiding truck gets trapped inside"
[<http://www.app.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20090727/NEWS/90727015>]

for use as
STEP 4 

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Focus:

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'RUN, FORREST, RUN!'

In the 1994 film *Forrest Gump*, Forrest is being mocked and tormented by a group of bullies who have targeted him because of his disabilities, including the leg braces Forrest must wear to be able to walk. On one particular day, the bullies are in a vehicle and find Forrest walking along a road with his friend Jenny. A chase ensues, and Forrest begins to run for his life. Behind him, Forrest can hear Jenny calling, "Run, Forrest, run!" As he briskly gimps along as fast as he is able, his leg braces end up falling off, and he begins running without them, running like the wind! And in fleeing, he discovers one of his greatest strengths as a football running back and later as a long-distance runner.

Can you hear the voice of the "cloud of witnesses" in Hebrews shouting out to you to run your race with endurance and to shed the sin that so easily entangles you (Heb. 12:1)? Scripture urges us to flee all kinds of sin (1 Cor. 6:18; 10:14; 1 Tim. 6:9–11; 2 Tim. 2:22). Let's run like the wind and be free of our entanglements!

[Activity]

Return to the groups you had in Step 1, and discuss these questions:

-  Look up the Scripture passages listed above. What are some of the sins from which we are instructed to flee?
-  What do the sins listed in the Scriptures (idolatry, the love of money, etc.) look like in our lives today?
-  Our sin entangles us, keeping us from all God has for us. What are some of the strengths you have—the things you could use to serve the Lord—that have been weakened or buried by sinful entanglements now or in the past?
-  How does it help to flee sin, rather than standing just on the line of sin and looking over at the temptation? (*The answer may seem obvious, but it's an important question.*)

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- ▶ **Take some time to make a plan of escape from any entanglements you are caught in right now. What will fleeing involve for you?** *(Sometimes it may include having difficult conversations and making difficult confessions, but these can be a way of fleeing—getting far away from—the sin in which we are stuck.)*

Close the lesson in prayer, asking God to give you and your students feet to run like the wind away from your entanglements, and endurance to keep running toward your goal of a life of eternal freedom with Him.

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