

Today's Youth Devotional

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Bible Reading: James 4:7-10

Humble yourselves before God. Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you.

James 4:7

THE ONLY CHRISTIANS who don't face temptation are the ones parked in heaven. The rest of us face temptation-sometimes subtle, sometimes slamming us in the face-every single day of our lives. The fact that you've become a Christian won't make Satan decide the game is over with you and stop picking at you. In fact, a person's problems with temptation never really begin until he or she starts to respond to God's Holy Spirit.

That's cheery news, isn't it? Actually, though, knowing Jesus gives you great power to handle temptation. You don't have to get slapped around. When you face temptation, here's how you fight back:

1. *Be on your guard.* Expect temptation. Benjamin Franklin was wrong when he said, "In this world nothing is certain but death and taxes." There's at least one more certainty: temptation.
2. *Hit back at temptation quickly.* The biggest danger in temptation is *entertaining* it-wallowing in it and telling yourself how much fun evil is-instead of dealing with it. It's like playing with a lion cub. It

might be fun for a while, but it soon grows up, turns on you, and tears you to pieces. Notice that the account of Jesus' temptation in Matthew 4 seems to indicate that he responded to each temptation quickly as in immediately!

3. *Submit to God.* You are wise to get to your knees and submit control of the situation to God. It's not enough to turn from the temptation-you must also turn to God. Tell him about your temptation and ask him for the help he is willing and able to offer: "Since he himself has gone through suffering and temptation, he is able to help us when we are being tempted" (Hebrews 2:18).
4. *Resist the devil.* Once you recognize a temptation and ask God's help in overcoming it, put your running shoes on and get out of there! Resist and rebuke the devil, and claim victory in the name of Jesus Christ.
5. *Say thanks.* And once God has helped you overcome, don't forget to praise him for keeping his promise, because "he will keep the temptation from becoming so strong that you 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" (1 Corinthians 10:13).

REFLECT: What are the biggest temptations you face? How do you deal with them? And does your current strategy work well?

PRAY: *Father, thank you for your presence and the strength you give me to resist temptation. Help me not to give the devil a way to defeat me. Turn my mind to prayer at the first sign of temptation.*

