

Don't Let us Yield to Temptation

(Matthew 6:9-13)

Introduction

[Teacher, provide each child with a party noisemaker, such as a horn, whistle, rattle, or perhaps jingle bells.]

I'm going to hand out noisemakers, but I don't want you to make any sounds with them. Hold your noisemaker so that it will not make a sound. If you can't resist the temptation to make a sound with your instrument, we'll know right away because we'll hear it and I'll take the instrument away from you and you'll have to sit down.

While we're silently holding these instruments, we'll go around the circle and name things or situations that tempt us to do wrong things. (For example, sneaking a cookie when Mom said, "No!", playing video games when you're supposed to be doing homework, lying about doing something wrong, and so on.)

[Teacher, when you've gone around the circle, notice how many kids are still standing, and comment on whether this group seems to have a hard time resisting temptation or seems to be able to resist temptation fairly well. Then let all the kids stand and use their noisemakers for one whole minute, making as much noise as possible. Then collect the noisemakers.]

- What made it hard or easy for you to resist the temptation to use your noisemaker?
- Do you think you're usually good at resisting temptation or not?

Jesus knows that it's hard to always do what's right and that sometimes we get tempted to do the wrong thing—doing the wrong thing looks fun. Sometimes we're strong enough to say, "No!" to the temptation and that's when we do the right thing. Jesus told us that we can ask God to help us when we're tempted to do the wrong thing. The part of the Lord's Prayer that we're learning today says, "*Don't let us yield to temptation.*" This verse reminds us that God can give us strength to do what is right.

Opening Prayer

Father, every day we make choices. Sometimes we choose the right things, but other times, doing wrong seems easier or more fun. Temptations lead us away from Your path. Keep us close to You and give us strength to choose what is right. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

Don't let us yield to temptation. (Matthew 6:13a)

Lesson

We've been learning the Lord's Prayer. Can anyone recite it? Let's say what we've learned so far together:

Matthew 6:9-10a

Our Father in heaven

May Your name be kept holy.

May Your Kingdom come soon.

May Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us today the food we need.

Forgive us our sins.

...as we have forgiven those who sin against us.

First, we learned that God wants us to have a close relationship with Him. He wants us to call Him, "*Father.*" He is a loving Father who cares about us, understands what we're going through, and can comfort us. When Jesus gave His disciples this recipe for prayer, He told them to begin prayer by calling out to, "*Our Father in Heaven.*"

Next, Jesus taught us that it is important for us to keep God's name holy. That means that we are to keep His name special. When you pray, it's important to remember Who you're talking to. Then begin your prayer by honoring God's name. Pray, "*Father, we admire You and adore You. We honor Your holy name.*"

Next, we learned that someday Jesus is coming back to Earth. When He gets here, He will set up His wonderful kingdom and live among us as our King. That will be an exciting day, indeed! That is a time we should all be longing for — and praying for. It thrills God's heart when we let Him know in prayer that we are eagerly looking forward to that day. Pray, "*May Your Kingdom come soon.*"

And while we wait for God to come back and set up His kingdom on Earth, we learned that we should be praying that people would do things God's way here on Earth! Pray, "*Father, while we wait for Your return, help us to do Your will here on earth just as the angels do in heaven.*"

After we've asked that God's will be done, we can come to Him and ask Him to provide our basic needs. He is our great Provider! He may not provide all our *wants*, but He knows our everyday *needs* and promises to care for us.

Next, we learned how important it is for us to ask God to forgive us when we sin. Because God is perfect He has to punish all sin. The reason God can forgive us is because Jesus already paid the price, the debt, for our sins when He died on the cross.

Next, we learned that it isn't enough to ask God to forgive us; He expects us to forgive others completely in the same way we want Him to forgive us. If you're having a hard time forgiving someone, remember all the wrongs that God has forgiven you and ask Him to help you.

The next phrase in the prayer is...

Matthew 6:13

And don't let us yield to temptation.

Today we're going to learn how important it is for us to resist the temptation to sin.

The word "*yield*" means *to give into*. How many of you have seen a Yield sign along the highway?



It tells drivers to let the incoming traffic into the flow—to give way to the other cars that are trying to merge into the traffic.

What is *temptation*? Temptation is the attraction to do something wrong. When you yield to the temptation to sin, you give in to the desire to think a wrong thought or say a wrong thing or do something that you know is not pleasing to God.

We are tempted to do wrong every day. We are all born with a *want* to do things our *own* way instead of God's way.

A temptation usually comes as an invitation to do something that you know is against the rules, but it looks easy or fun and you decide to do it even though it's wrong. It may seem like it's worth the risk at the time; but when we make a choice to do a wrong thing it is always disappointing to God.

Here's what God's word says about temptation:

James 1:12

God blesses those who patiently endure testing and temptation. Afterward they will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.

Do you know where temptation to do wrong comes from?

James 1:13-15

*And remember, when you are being tempted, do not say, "God is tempting me." God is never tempted to do wrong and **he never tempts anyone** else. (14) Temptation comes from our own desires, which entice us and drag us away. (15) These desires give birth to sinful actions. And when sin is allowed to grow, it gives birth to death.*

This verse tells us that God doesn't tempt us. Temptation to sin comes from our own sinful nature. Temptation to sin can also come from the Devil. He can put those thoughts and ideas into your mind.

The Way Out

It's important to realize that the temptation to sin is not the sin. It's what you do with the temptation that can be sinful. Let me illustrate this.

[Teacher, make two signs, one that says, "God" and another that says, "Sin." Choose two children to stand on either side of you to hold these two signs up in front of them.]

If I am looking at God [*turn and face the "God" sign*] and I'm doing what pleases Him, I will not choose to sin.

What's something that might tempt you to look away from God and stop doing right? [Have children call out things that might tempt them to do wrong.]

If I think about doing [*one of their ideas*] I start to turn away from God. [*Slowly turn away from the "God" sign and face the children.*]

I am thinking about whether I should do what is right [*face the "God" sign*] or what is wrong [*face the "Sin" sign*]. This middle time where I am thinking of whether to do right or wrong is the time that I am being tempted. So far, I haven't sinned. But, if I decide to do the wrong thing, I *will* sin. [*Turn and put your arm around the child holding the "Sin" sign.*] But, if I decide I don't want to sin and I *want* to obey God [*turn and put your arm around the child holding the "God" sign*] then I made a choice NOT to sin.

It's our own desires that turn us from God and entice us to choose sin. God doesn't tempt us. In fact, God can give us strength so that we don't sin!

1 Corinthians 10:13

*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.*

God will provide "a way out" for us when we're tempted. That means that when we're tempted to do wrong, there's always that *in between* time when we have a choice to do the right thing – the thing that would please God and bring His name honor.

[Teacher, have children form three groups. Give each group one of the following scenarios. Let them discuss the situations and decide what the temptation is and what the "way out" is for the child in the story.]

Situation 1:

Chad was excited about spending the night at Zachary's house with some other guys from school. When it got late, Chris suggested they watch a movie. He brought out *Shriek of the Vampire*. Chad's parents didn't want him to watch horror movies. Tyler teased, "*Chad can't watch it. He'd be scared!*" Chad wanted to watch the movie. His parents probably wouldn't find out anyway. But Chad knew it was wrong to disobey them. He wondered to himself, "*What should I do?*"

- What was Chad tempted to do?
- What was Chad's "way out"?

Situation 2

Amanda and Polly always sat together at lunch. Neither one had to worry about sitting alone. Amanda always knew she had a friend, not like Kristen who always sat by herself. Kristen was not popular, and most people thought she was kind of annoying.

One day, while Amanda and Polly were eating, Kristen walked right toward them. Polly said, "*Quick put your book on that empty seat so she won't sit here.*"

- What was Amanda tempted to do?
- What was Amanda's "way out"?

Situation 3

Cameron's parents told him he couldn't play any video games until his homework was done and his room was clean. Cameron did clean his room, but then got tired of working and decided he needed a rest. "*My parents are in the kitchen talking. They won't know if I play just one video game before I start my homework,*" he thought.

- What was Cameron tempted to do?
- What was Cameron's "way out"?

- How does knowing God, help us know which actions are right and which are wrong in these situations?
- When can we ask God to give us strength?

Everyone is tempted to sin every day. Did you know that even Jesus faced temptation while he was on earth?

Hebrews 4:15-16

This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same testing we do, yet he did not sin. (16) So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most.

Jesus is the "high priest" mentioned in this verse. Although Jesus was tempted, He never gave in to temptation or sinned. Since Jesus understands temptation, we can go to him for help whenever we're tempted.

Temptation Rap

[Teacher, write the words to the rap below on a poster, and post it so everyone can see them. Have the kids work together to develop actions to accompany the words.]

*Sometimes I feel it's only me
Who finds it hard as it can be
To do the things I know I should,
Avoid the wrong and do the good.
But others have this trouble, too.
And now I know what I should do!
When tempted now to go astray,
I'll look to God, yes, stop and pray.
I'll ask His help to keep me strong
And follow His way, all day long.*

- How can we help each other resist temptation?

Closing Prayer

Father, thank You for promising to provide a way out when we are tempted to do wrong. Help us recognize temptations that pull us away from You and remember You can give us strength to do what's right. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

Learning Activities**Craft Corner****Game Center****Tackling Temptation**

Preparation: Have children choose partners; each game is played by two. Enlarge, then cut out a game board for each set of children; have a different colored set of cards for each child that plays.

Play: Shuffle each set of colored cards and place them face down in individual piles, one of each color. The first child draws the top card of his color, reads it aloud, and decides how the action on the card can help overcome one of the temptations on the board. He places the card over that temptation. (Some cards may be appropriate for more than one temptation, so the child may choose which temptation to cover with the card.) Then, the other child draws the top card of his color, and places it over a temptation.

The first child to cover four temptations in a row in any direction wins.

[For more lessons for children, visit
<https://www.freechildrensministrylessons.com>]

Tackling Temptation

Playing Board

Sometimes I am tempted to stay outside too late.	Sometimes I am tempted to copy from someone else's homework.	Sometimes I am tempted to stay home from church to play.	Sometimes I am tempted to take a candy bar that isn't mine.
Sometimes I am tempted to make fun of someone who is different.	Sometimes I am tempted to use bad language when I'm angry.	Sometimes I am tempted to blame my friend for my own mistake.	Sometimes I am tempted to copy answers from someone else's test.
Sometimes I am tempted to laugh when someone is being teased.	Sometimes I am tempted to eat a cookie when Dad said wait 'til later.	Sometimes I am tempted to watch a TV show Mom said not to watch.	Sometimes I am tempted to hide my toys under my bed when Dad says to clean up.
Sometimes I am tempted to cheat when playing a game.	Sometimes I am tempted to make fun of my teacher when he or she isn't looking.	Sometimes I am tempted to poke my brother in the ribs, then say he poked me first.	Sometimes I am tempted to be rude to my teacher.

Game Cards

God can give me strength to be inside on time.	God can give me strength to turn off the TV and do my homework.	God can give me strength to go to church now and play later.	God can give me strength to save my allowance to buy a candy bar.
God can give me strength to be kind to others, even if it's hard.	God can give me strength to use kind words.	God can give me strength to admit when I'm wrong.	God can give me strength to study for my test.
God can give me strength to stand up for those who are being teased.	God can give me strength to wait 'til after dinner to have dessert.	God can give me strength to obey when Mom says to turn off the TV.	God can give me strength to clean my room when asked.
God can give me strength to follow the rules to games.	God can give me strength to show respect to adults.	God can give me strength to show kindness to my brother.	God can give me strength to be polite to my teacher.