

**The Deceptive Tactics of Satan**

Passages: As listed in the lesson.

*Memory Verse*

“Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.” (2 Timothy 2:22)

<b>Knowledge of God’s Will [God’s Word]</b>	<b>Knowledge of God [God’s Divine Nature]</b>	<b>Good Works [Behavior]</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Satan uses many deceptive tactics.</li><li>2. Falling into sin has consequences.</li><li>3. We can overcome Satan’s deceptive tactics with God’s help.</li></ol>	God is almighty, ever-present, all-knowing, and everlasting.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Hide God’s word in our hearts.</li><li>2. Pray and be empowered by the Holy Spirit.</li><li>3. Flee from and avoid temptation.</li><li>4. Make spiritual friends.</li></ol>

*Overview*

**Events and Spiritual Teachings**

- A. Satan’s Deceptive Tactics
- B. The Consequences of Falling into Temptation

**Life Application:** Overcoming Satan’s Deceptive Tactics

**Memory Verse**

**Conclusion:** God has given us a way not only to be free from sin, but also to be victorious over our sinful ways through the power of the Holy Spirit.

## *Spiritual Teaching*

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### **Introduction: What Is Temptation?**

#### **Materials**

- \$20 dollar bill
- Gummy worm
- Paper clip
- Chopstick
- 12-inch string

#### **Preparation**

*Before class, tie one end of the string to the chopstick and the other end to the paper clip. This will act as your mini fishing pole.*

The Bible describes Satan as a tempter, as one that is trying to lure us away from God. What does that look like? *(Take out the fishing pole and attach a gummy worm to the paper clip. Pretend to lure the students with the gummy worm.)*

Just as I have tried to tempt you into taking the gummy worm, Satan tries to tempt us into taking the bait that he has set in front of us. Sometimes, we don't fall for the temptation because we are able to overcome it. At this point, what does Satan do? Does he give up? Nope! Instead, he tries to tempt us even more with the things that we desire. *(Take off the gummy worm and attach the money to the paper clip. Again, pretend to lure the students with the bait.)*

When Satan fails, he does not give up. Every day, we find ourselves overwhelmed by the temptations that we encounter. This is not something new; rather, we can find many examples of Satan's deceptions in the Bible. Today, we will learn about his deceptive tactics so that we may know how to identify them and, most importantly, how to overcome them!

#### **A. Satan's Deceptive Tactics**

There are three main desires that Satan tries to tempt us with. Let's turn to 1 John 2:16. Every sin in the world is rooted in three desires: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. If we follow these desires, we are "of the world." "If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1 Jn 2:15). Let's take a closer look at the nature of these three temptations and how Satan uses these desires to pull our hearts away from God.

##### **1. The lust of the flesh**

First, "flesh" refers to your physical body. As a result, the lust of the flesh refers to the desire to fulfill the pleasures of your physical body without thinking about the will of God. A common example of this would be having sex before marriage. However, the lust of the flesh is not only limited to sexual sin. A glutton—a person who has an unhealthy love for food and thus eats too much—can also be guilty of the lust of the flesh.

##### **2. The lust of the eyes**

This refers to the desire to possess the things that we see. When we want what other people have, or when something new comes along and we feel the need to own it, we are guilty of the lust of the eyes. It is a form of materialism, where we prioritize obtaining the physical things around us over the invisible things of God's heavenly kingdom and His righteousness.

### 3. The pride of life

This refers to the desire to rise up or exalt ourselves so that we are equal to or above God. This is perhaps the vilest of the three desires because Satan was cast out of heaven for his pride. Pride is tricky to catch, as it starts within ourselves, and we are often blind to it. For example, it can start with a simple thought, such as “I can do a better job than him,” “I look better than my friends,” or “I know better.” These thoughts reveal the pride that is within us.

These three temptations can be found throughout the Bible. Let us look at two examples to see how Satan uses them to tempt us. The first is a familiar story. God had commanded Adam and Eve: “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die” (Gen 2:16–17). However, the deceptive serpent twisted God’s commandment. Let’s break down Genesis 3:1–6 so that we can better understand Satan’s tricks.

#### 1. Genesis 3:1–3

- Serpent: “Has God indeed said, ‘*You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?*’”
- Eve: “We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, ‘*You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.*’”

#### 2. Genesis 3:4–6

- Serpent: “*You will not surely die.* For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be *like God*, knowing good and evil.”
- Eve: So when Eve saw that the tree was *good for food*, that it was *pleasant to the eyes*, and a tree *desirable to make one wise*, she took of its fruit and ate.
  - From Eve’s response, we can see that she fell into temptation because of the three things that we mentioned in 1 John 2:16.
    - “Good for food” = Lust of flesh
    - “Pleasant to the eyes” = Lust of the eyes
    - “Desirable to make one wise” = Pride of life
  - Satan knows our desires, and he is willing to use our desires to make us sin against God!

We can see Satan’s deceptive tactics through his conversation with Eve. First, he made her question God’s commandment by asking her what God had commanded. Second, he denied the consequence of breaking the commandment by downplaying the seriousness of disobeying it. Lastly, he made disobedience to God seem desirable by making Eve believe that she would become like God if she ate the fruit. These are the three tactics that Satan used to trick Adam and Eve.

Let’s look at another example. Turn to 2 Samuel 11:1–5.

King David fell into temptation for two reasons. First, it describes that at the time when kings went out to battle, King David sent his commander Joab to lead the army in his place while he remained in Jerusalem. David had already made a mistake right from the beginning: he was not where he was supposed to be! Instead of fighting alongside his men against the Ammonites, he was spending his time in the palace. He was not watchful of himself and allowed himself to lose his vigilance. So, Satan took the opportunity to lure him into temptation.

Secondly, instead of looking away when he saw Bathsheba, he desired her and sought her out. Later on, King David took her even though he knew she was married. He acted on the lust of his eyes, and in doing so, fulfilled the lust of his flesh.

King David fell into temptation in a time of prosperity and peace for his country. This was the same with Adam and Eve in the beautiful garden of Eden. These examples in the Bible serve as a warning to us that we must constantly be on guard against the temptations of Satan, especially in peaceful times when we are not as attentive. Satan does not only attack us when we are ready for him; he will try to attack us when we are the most relaxed and, therefore, the most vulnerable. Since we do not know when Satan will try to tempt us, it is so important that we stay alert spiritually.

### **B. The Consequences of Falling into Temptation**

Adam, Eve, and King David all fell into temptation and suffered the consequences. The consequence of falling into temptation is sin. However, this sin does not only impact us; it can have a negative impact on our relationships.

#### **Activity**

Divide your class into three groups, depending on class size. Ask each student to look up Genesis 3:7–24. Each group must analyze the passage and find the consequence in one of Adam and Eve’s three relationships:

- Group 1 – Relationship with God
- Group 2 – Relationship with each other
- Group 3 – Relationship with nature

#### **Relationship with God (Genesis 3:8–12)**

Sin is what separates or alienates us from God, and it even makes us His enemy (Col 1:21)! Adam and Eve’s disobedience broke their relationship with God. They were afraid to be in the presence of God because of their sin. They even tried to hide from Him. No longer were they living under the blessing of God; spiritually, they had died because of their sin.

#### **Relationship with each other (Genesis 3:7, 12, 16)**

Adam no longer saw Eve as the “bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh,” but called her “the woman whom [God] gave to be with [him].” He put the blame for his actions on Eve and also on God. The state of their relationship changed from harmony to conflict. This was the consequence of their sin!

#### **Relationship with nature (Genesis 3:17–19, 23)**

Adam used to rule over the earth, but now the ground had been cursed with weeds and thorns. He now had to labor and toil to till the land so that he may eat of its food. Ultimately, Adam and Eve were banished from the garden of Eden.

From these three examples, we can see the negative impact of sin on our relationships. However, we must remember that the ultimate consequence of sin is death. Let’s read James 1:14–15.

These verses show us a progression: Desire leads to sin, which leads to death. We may all have sinful desires, but it is when we act upon them and allow them to fester in our minds that they become a sin. If we continue to sin without repenting, then it ends in our spiritual death. We will be unable to go to heaven and will be condemned to burn in everlasting fire! But God does not want this to happen to us. Rather, He wants us to obey His commandments so that we are able to receive everlasting life.

### Check for Understanding

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- 1. What are the three ways that Satan tries to tempt us?** Satan tries to tempt us through the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life.
- 2. How did Eve fall to the three temptations?** She saw that the fruit of the tree was:
  - a. Good for food = Lust of the flesh
  - b. Pleasant to the eyes = Lust of the eyes
  - c. Desirable to make one wise = Pride of life
- 3. What are Satan's deceptive tactics?** He makes us question God's commandments; He denies the consequences of breaking the commandments; He makes disobedience seem desirable.
- 4. How does sin impact our relationships?** It breaks our relationship with God and our relationships with others.
- 5. What is the ultimate consequence of sin?** Eternal death is the ultimate consequence of sin.

### Life Application

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#### Overcoming Satan's Deceptive Tactics

Even though Adam and Eve failed to resist the temptation set by Satan, we do not have to follow in their footsteps. God has given us many different ways to overcome Satan's temptations.

#### 1. Flee from and avoid temptation (2 Tim 2:22)

The Bible tells us that we need to flee from youthful lusts or, in other words, run away from them! We encounter temptations every day, so we must be able to identify the temptations of Satan and run away, just as Joseph did when he fled from his master's wife (Gen 39). One way of running is by avoiding situations where we know we will be tempted. For example, if you know that you are prone to cheating, position yourself during a test so that you cannot see the paper of the person next to you. Or if you know a friend who likes you, avoid spending time alone with him or her. Satan is a roaring lion waiting to devour us, so we must be wise and flee from his attacks!

**Discuss:** How can you flee from the temptations in your life?

#### 2. Hide the word of God in our heart (Ps 119:11)

Sometimes, even though we try to avoid temptation, it still finds its way to us. As a result, we have to be filled with the word of God so that we know how to overcome temptation. Jesus Christ set the example for us when He was tempted in the wilderness and used the word of God to defend against Satan. In the same way, the word of God empowers us and helps us to see very clearly what we should and should not do.

**Discuss:** What is one verse in the Bible that will help you to defend against temptation? (*Possible examples: Romans 12:1–2; Ephesians 5:8; 1 John 3:24*)

#### 3. Pray and be empowered by the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8)

The Holy Spirit can empower us so that we are able to overcome our temptations. As we become filled with the Spirit of God, we can suppress our fleshly desires and resist temptation. When His disciples fell asleep, Jesus Christ admonished them, saying, "Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Mt 26:41). Therefore, it is important to make sure that we constantly pray and always strive for the fullness of the Holy Spirit. When we do, we will receive the power to overcome.

**Discuss:** What can you do to include more time for prayer in your life?

#### **4. Make spiritual friends (Eccl 4:12)**

Having spiritual friends can help us when we are struggling with temptation because they can brainstorm solutions with us and hold us accountable for our actions. Most importantly, a spiritual friend is able to pray for us and be there for us in our time of trouble. God does not want us to struggle with our temptations alone, but to overcome them through the help of our brothers and sisters and His great power!

**Discuss:** How has your spiritual friend helped you in times of temptation?

#### **Testimony #1 – Caught Off-Guard**

*One time while my friends and I were studying together in a library, they invited me to a birthday dinner and told me it was probably going to be on a Friday night. I was caught off-guard, and I was not bold enough to explain to everyone in our study group, many of whom didn't know me that well, about how I observe the Sabbath. Afraid that I would make the atmosphere awkward, I took the easy way out and said, "Sure, I'll go." Later that evening, however, my conscience kept rebuking me, and I kept thinking to myself that I had been unfaithful to God. Unable to reconcile with the fact that I had accepted the invitation, I wrote an email to my friend who was organizing the dinner and explained that I could not make it on Friday night because I observe the Sabbath and that I could not go to the birthday dinner in good conscience. Thank God, she was understanding and changed the time to Saturday night to accommodate me!*

#### **Testimony #2 – To Cheat or Not to Cheat?**

*In history class, we had been given the assignment to memorize all fifty states and their state capitals. I had spent weeks memorizing it; however, by the day of the test there were still a couple of state capitals that I got confused about. My history teacher passed out the test, and I quickly began to fill in all the blanks. After a few minutes, I heard my friend who was seated next to me whispering, "Psst, psst, look here." I looked and saw that he had hidden a list of the states and their capitals underneath his desk and that he was copying from it. Quickly, I glanced at my teacher who was sitting at his desk reading a book, completely unaware. It was at this point that I struggled within myself. I thought, "There's no harm in looking." However, just as quickly as that thought came into my mind, another thought came into my mind, "God knows." With that, I quickly turned to my friend and whispered back, "I don't need it." Praise the Lord, I finished the test on my own and turned it in. Later on, when we got our test scores back, I actually got a better grade than my friend who had cheated!*

#### **Testimony #3 – Burdens Are Lifted**

*"Downloading music illegally is stealing!" My teacher proclaimed this during one afternoon RE class. Before this, I had thought, "Everyone does it, so it must be okay!" However, after that RE class, it made me realize that I really was breaking the eighth commandment. The Bible tells us that when you break one commandment, you break them all. However, even with that knowledge, it was difficult for me to get rid of all my illegally downloaded music. I would make excuses such as, "That musician is way richer than I am; they wouldn't miss the dollar that I would have paid!" It was not until a student spiritual convocation that God empowered me to finally get rid of this sin. During one prayer in the middle of the week, I had hit a wall in my prayers. I was repenting of my sins, but at the same time, I didn't feel God responding. It was at this point that I thought about all the illegal music*

*that I had stored in my computer at home. I began to ask God to forgive me for my sinfulness and vowed to erase it all when I got home. I prayed to God to empower me with His power to do so! It was at this point that a great joy filled my heart! The day when SSC ended, I went home and deleted all of the illegal content on my computer. With the click of a mouse, I could feel a burden being lifted from me. This would not have been possible without the power of God and His transforming power! Praise the Lord for His mercy and grace!*

### **Discuss**

- Share how each person overcame Satan's temptations.
- Share similar experiences of how you overcame Satan with God's help.

### **Memory Verse**

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"Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart." (2 Timothy 2:22)

### **Meaning**

1. Paul taught Timothy, to flee from "youthful lusts", but what exactly does this refer to? This isn't just a warning against sexual immorality, but anything that sparks some sort of desire. Today, this may be our beauty, fame on social media, or other worldly interests that would interfere with our pursuit of godliness. Moreover, Paul wrote to "flee" from them! This isn't simply a matter of cutting back, but of avoiding them entirely, as much as we can.
2. The more we pursue God, the less that we will want to sin against Him because we know that He grieves when He sees our sins (Gen 6:6). Our sin can also become a wall that separates us from God. On the other hand, the more we pursue and fill ourselves with righteousness, faith, love, and peace, the less we will want to sin against God.

### **Conclusion**

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Satan's deceptions are not always easy to see through, and many times he will attack us during the moments we feel most relaxed and are the most vulnerable. But though Satan employs many deceptive tactics to drag us into sin, God has given us a way to defend ourselves. In order to defend against Satan's deceptive tactics, we must flee from temptation, surround ourselves with spiritual friends, pray for the power of the Holy Spirit, and hide God's word in our hearts. Then, with God's guidance and the power of the Holy Spirit, we will be victorious over our sinful ways and receive our inheritance in God's heavenly kingdom.

Lesson 12 Homework Assignment Answer Key

1. What comes naturally to us when we pursue God? Why?  
*The more we pursue God, the less that we will want to sin against Him because we know that He grieves when He sees our sins.*
2. “For all that is in the world—the lust of the \_\_\_\_\_, the lust of the \_\_\_\_\_, and the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_—is not of the Father but is of the world.” (1 John 2:16)  
*flesh, eyes, pride, life*
3. “But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own \_\_\_\_\_ and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to \_\_\_\_\_; and \_\_\_\_\_, when it is full-grown, brings forth \_\_\_\_\_.” (James 1:14–15)  
*desires, sin, sin, death*
4. What are the deceptive tactics of Satan?  
*He makes us question God’s commandments, denies or disguises the consequences of breaking them, and makes disobedience seem desirable.*
5. Name one way we can overcome Satan’s deceptions, and explain it in your own words.
  - a. *Flee from and avoid temptation: We will be less likely to sin if we simply remove the temptation from our lives or position ourselves so that it is no longer an option.*
  - b. *Hide the word of God in our heart: Just as Jesus Christ defended Himself with Scripture, the word of God helps us to see clearly what we should or should not do.*
  - c. *Pray and be empowered by the Holy Spirit: As Jesus told His disciples, we must watch and pray, because the Spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. The Holy Spirit empowers us so that we are able to overcome our temptations.*
  - d. *Make spiritual friends: Spiritual friends can help come up with solutions for temptations and hold us accountable for our actions. They can also pray for us in times of trouble. God does not want us to struggle alone.*
6. List two actions that you will take this week to overcome Satan’s deceptive tactics in your own life.  
*Personal answers. Encourage the students to come up with realistic, “actionable” items. Examples may be: ask my parents to wake me earlier so that I can pray in the morning; set an alarm to read the Bible each night with my sibling or fellow student; move my computer into a common living/family room so that I am not tempted to visit certain websites, etc.*