**Learn in Community**



Small Group Study

**Volume Overview**

**How does God help me overcome?**

For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength. ([Philippians 4:13](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Php4.13))

*Life can be full of challenges. Thankfully, when we make the decision to live for God, we can have confidence that we’re no longer walking through life alone. Because God wants us to succeed, He commits to being with us every step of the way. In a challenging and chaotic world, God offers His help to us throughout every difficult circumstance.*

*He knows that we’ll face fears, decisions, and emotions we don’t feel equipped to handle. The good news is that He has a plan for every fear, every worry, every emotion, every sin, and every decision we face. God’s desire is for us to live free from the worries of our world, so we can enjoy living fully for Him. When we don’t know what to do, we can turn to God for the answer. He will help us overcome every challenge.*

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| **First time leading *Learn* for Adults? Check out the** [***Facilitator Guide***](https://0b769b0ed3569ef9d18b-f88d8272f61086866d50d048b43ef630.ssl.cf2.rackcdn.com/sites/biblengagementproject/Listen_Facilitator_Guide.pdf)**.** |

To access session content and videos from a computer, visit: [BibleEngagementProject.com/downloads](https://bibleengagementproject.com/downloads)

**Engage**

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| **QUESTION**  What are some healthy ways to deal with temptation? What are some unhealthy ways? |

Let’s face it. Talking about temptation can be uncomfortable. The subject likely brings up guilt and shame from our past. However, these conversations are important to our faith journey. As we share our struggles with God and others, we remove the power of the enemy to isolate us and take us down.

The right response to temptation can give us the opportunity to trust God’s Word and grow in our faith. Every temptation we overcome gives us strength for our next battle against the enemy. Learning to overcome temptation is essential for a life lived well for God.

**Watch**

As we watch this video, think about your answer to this question: How has God helped you when you’ve faced temptation?



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| **QUESTION**  How has God helped you when you’ve faced temptation? |

**Consider What the Bible Says**

At the beginning of [Genesis 37](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Ge37), as we meet Joseph, we’re told that he is seventeen years old. Although we don’t know exactly how much time passed between Joseph receiving the robe from his father and his brothers selling him into slavery, scholars estimate that he was between seventeen and nineteen years old when he was taken to Egypt.

Joseph’s boss, Potiphar, was captain of Pharaoh’s guard. As such, he would have been a wealthy and influential man. God’s favor was on Joseph’s young life, even in his captivity. Recognizing this, Potiphar increased Joseph’s influence in his new situation. This position of influence would pale in comparison to what God eventually had planned for Joseph.

In the meantime, Joseph’s life was not without trials and temptations. But through his choices, Joseph’s life demonstrated the principle Jesus taught in [Luke 16:10](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Lk16.10)—the one who is faithful in small things will be given more.

**Temptation Often Comes in Seasons of Success**

Read [Genesis 39:1–7](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Ge39.1-7).

Temptations can come at any time. Joseph eventually caught the eye of Potiphar’s lustful wife. Many times when things are going well, our faith is tested by strong temptations. It’s a mistake to believe that we’re protected from temptation when we’re thriving in the Lord’s favor.

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| **QUESTION**  What can we learn from Joseph’s situation about what control we have over when or how we’re tempted? |

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| **QUESTION**  Can you see anything in Joseph’s behavior that might have opened the door of temptation? |

**Temptation Is Not a Sin, but Indulging in It Is**

Read [Genesis 39:8–12](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Ge39.8-12).

Joseph’s temptation didn’t stop after the first time he refused to give in to Potiphar’s wife. In fact, the pressure escalated to the point of Potiphar’s wife suggesting physical engagement. Still, Joseph stood his ground. He honored his master and feared God. This kept him from sinning.

Experiencing temptation may not be our choice but giving in to it is. Overcoming temptation requires an active fight. Joseph was active in resisting temptation and sin. He avoided being alone with Potiphar’s wife. Even when she tried to grab him, Joseph tore himself away. He fought well and, with God’s help, kept himself from sinning.

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| **QUESTION**  Joseph had multiple ways out of temptation. What may keep us from taking the way out? |

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| **QUESTION**  Joseph acted with respect toward God and his master (verse [9](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Ge39.9)). How did respecting what he knew God expected help Joseph overcome temptation? |

**Rejection and Suffering Can Accompany Temptations**

Read [Genesis 39:13–23](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Ge39.13-23).

Joseph resisted giving in to temptation. But even though he did the right thing, he was still punished by his master. Potiphar believed his wife’s lies and threw Joseph into prison. We can only imagine Joseph’s agony over going to prison from a position of influence when he wasn’t even guilty. After all, he had done the right thing.

We need to note that God was with Joseph even when things didn’t resolve fairly. God showed His love and favor toward Joseph even in prison. The world may reject us when we resist temptation, but God won’t. He will reward us with His love and trust when we refuse to sin.

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| **QUESTION**  Have you experienced rejection or suffering in your life even though you did the right thing? |

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| **QUESTION**  Sin is never done in secret; God always knows. How does the lie that we can keep things secret contribute to the choice to sin? |

**Did You Know?**

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| *In ancient Egypt, the punishment for a slave attempting to rape a master’s family member would have been immediate execution. However, Potiphar’s actions either speak of his impressive favor for Joseph or his lack of belief in his wife’s claims compared to the character of Joseph that he already knew. Nevertheless, the prison where Joseph was placed was designated for Pharaoh’s prisoners. This speaks of the high power that Potiphar held in the kingdom, exemplifying to an even greater extent the mercy shown toward Joseph. In that time, it would have been unheard of for a high-ranking official not to seek capital punishment for such a transgression.* |

**Reflect**

**God Helps Me with Temptation**

Resisting temptation is almost a foreign concept in our culture today. Our world believes in immersing itself in pleasure. Giving in to temptation is the normal human response. As Christians, we know that temptations can derail us. Although resisting temptation may result in unjust outcomes and rejection, it’s nothing compared to the death that sin causes.

But temptation can also bring opportunities. When we resist temptation, we grow in our faith. When we respond unexpectedly to temptation by resisting it, we may catch the eye of those who are watching. We show the world a better way. God can make our right choices visible to unbelievers, so we can share the reason for our honorable stance—our hope in God.

**Listen to God**

Let’s pause and listen to what God might want to say to us about what we have read and shared. Be silent for a few moments and reflect on the following questions. Respond to the one that most resonates with what God is saying to you now. Then complete the others during Day 1 of your devotion time this week.

**Personal Reflection Questions**

*Record your answers to the following questions in the space provided or in your personal journal.*

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| **QUESTION**  What did you learn from Joseph’s story about how to overcome temptation in your life? |

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| **QUESTION**  What temptations are hardest for you to overcome? |

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| **QUESTION**  Knowing what temptations are hardest for you, how can you actively fight against them? What can you do to avoid these temptations? |

**Activate**

Joseph seemed to have determined in his heart to obey God. His actions show that he was resolved to act according to God’s standards and not according to the pleasures of his flesh. A big help in overcoming temptation is to have a plan in place. We need to have an active fighting strategy firmly in our mind. This means knowing how to avoid and resist common temptations we may face. It can also help to invite trusted friends and mentors to keep us accountable.

**Challenge**

Do you have a trusted friend or mentor who can help you navigate times of temptation? If not, prayerfully consider who can help you fight temptation. If no one comes to mind, ask God to provide an accountability partner for you.

**Prayer Requests**

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| Note any requests from the group and remember to pray for them during the week. |

Before next time, continue to spend time in God’s Word with the personal devotions.

**What We Believe**

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| **Official Doctrine**  Salvation is an ongoing conflict with temptation and sin. Temptation and sin are realities of life in a fallen world. While believers faithfully trust in and follow Christ, they are nonetheless subject to human frailty. Though granted justification and righteousness before God on the basis of the righteousness of Christ, they do not attain to sinless perfection in this world. “Indeed, we all make many mistakes” ([James 3:2](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Jas3.2)). “If we claim we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves and not living in the truth” ([1 John 1:8](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.1Jn1.8)).  Nonetheless, the Scriptures emphasize that the Christian life is to be lived on a positive trajectory of spiritual transformation. Believers have been born again by the Spirit of God ([John 3:3–8](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Jn3.3-8)), and they are new creations for whom the old has gone and the new has come ([2 Corinthians 5:17](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.2Co5.17)). So John confidently repeated in his later epistle, “Those who have been born into God’s family do not make a practice of sinning, because God’s life is in them” ([1 John 3:9](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.1Jn3.9)). The same Holy Spirit who convicts unbelievers of sin ([John 16:8](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Jn16.8)) continues to convict believers of sin and to guide them into truth ([John 16:13](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Jn16.13)). |

**Learn on Your Own**

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| *Before you begin each devotion, pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Record your answers to the following questions in the space provided or in your personal journal.* |

**Day 1: God Helps Me with Temptation**

Read [Genesis 39:1–23](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Ge39.1-23).

Look back over Learn in Community and complete your responses to the Personal Reflection Questions. Plan how to complete the Activate component if you haven’t already done so. If time permits, reread the Scripture too.

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| **QUESTION**  What is God saying to you about helping you to overcome temptation? |

**Learn on Your Own**

**Day 2: We Must Resolve to Do Right before We Are Tempted**

Read [2 Timothy 2:15–26](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.2Ti2.15-26).

The Bible has many lists of behaviors that can help us develop godly character. Godly character is one of the best defenses against temptation. We also need to keep ourself from the ungodly behaviors described in God’s Word. If we use the Word as our guide to grow in godliness, our automatic response to temptation will also honor God.

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| **QUESTION**  What are the ungodly behaviors to avoid according to these verses? |

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| **QUESTION**  What are the godly behaviors we must develop and pursue according to these verses? |

**Learn on Your Own**

**Day 3: God’s Word Helps Us Defeat Temptation**

Read [Matthew 4:1–11](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mt4.1-11).

God’s Word is the standard that shows us the difference between right and wrong. Knowing God’s Word helps us stand firm when we face temptation. We can obey what God’s Word tells us as an alternative to sinning. Jesus modeled this well for us.

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| **QUESTION**  What did Satan tempt Jesus with? Do you see any pattern between His temptations and the things that tempt you? |

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| **QUESTION**  What can you learn from Jesus’ use of Scripture to fight temptation? |

**Learn on Your Own**

**Day 4: Prayer Protects Us from Temptation**

Read [Matthew 6:9–15](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mt6.9-15).

In the Lord’s Prayer, Jesus taught us to pray against temptation. God may choose to prevent us from going through the trial of temptation. But when we *are* tempted, we can ask God to deliver us from the enemy.

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| **QUESTION**  Why do you think Jesus taught His disciples to pray against temptation? |

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| **QUESTION**  Have you seen someone delivered from sin or temptation after praying? What do you remember about it? |

**Learn on Your Own**

**Day 5: God Helps Us Overcome Temptation**

Read [1 Corinthians 10:6–13](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.1Co10.6-13).

God is faithful even when we’re being tempted. He doesn’t leave us without help. First, He puts a boundary around us, so we can stand against temptations. Second, He provides a way out of temptation.

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| **QUESTION**  What does a way out of temptation look like for you? |

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| **QUESTION**  Think of times when you were tempted in the past. Whether you gave in to the temptation or not, can you recognize any way out of that situation as you look back? |