



OVERCOMING TEMPTATION

Writer: Rob Quinn
Designer: Kaeli Hearn
Editor: Jennifer Hooks

Lesson 2



Lesson 2: Dealing With
Overwhelming Temptations



Bible Passages: Matthew 11:28-30,
Luke 22:40, Ephesians 6:10-18



Bottom Line: The battle with
temptation is overwhelming and only
with God can we win the battle.



What's That to Me?

Preteens face temptation every day and every week. If they remember that God is willing to walk alongside them through temptation, they'll feel more equipped to resist it.

SUPPLIES

OPENING GAME: LIFELINE FOR TEMPTATION

- 2 pieces of paper for each preteen
- Large fishing net
- Water gun filled with water

TEACH: TEAM UP AGAINST TEMPTATION

- 3 soft balls
- Whiteboard or flipchart and markers
- Bibles
- Temptation Lists from Week 1
- Tape
- Paper and pens/pencils for each preteen
- Trash bucket
- Nerf gun and lots of Nerf ammo
- 6 cardboard signs with a piece of God's armor written on each: Belt of Truth, Breastplate of Righteousness, Sandals of Peace, Shield of Faith, Helmet of Salvation, Sword of the Spirit

SMALL GROUPS: FOLLOW GOD'S PATH

- 1 paper plate for each preteen
- Pencils/pens
- 1 paper plate with "God" written on it
- Prize/candy for each preteen

OVERVIEW

Day in and day out, preteens deal with temptations coming from every angle. It can be overwhelming to try to resist them, but God wants them to know He is ready to help them fight against temptation everyday. Preteens will see how they can "gear up" to fight temptation and how they can do their part along with God's help to resist it.

OPENING GAME

LIFELINE FOR TEMPTATION

Supplies:

- 2 pieces of paper for each preteen
- Large fishing net
- Water gun filled with water

What to Do: Have your preteens form a large circle. Choose one preteen to be in the middle.

Give all preteens in the circle a piece of paper and have them create a paper airplane. Once they all have their airplane, tell them to prepare to launch it into the center of the circle. Do a 10-second countdown—and then launch.

The person in the center needs to catch as many of the planes as possible out of midair—not off the floor. See how successful the person is, then have preteens pick up any airplane and prepare to try again. Play a few rounds and see how many the preteen in the center can catch.

Ask the preteen in the center:

- Was this experience more than one person could handle alone? Why or why not?
- Ask whether the preteen would like help to be more successful. If the answer is yes, offer the following options.

The Three Lifelines

1. The preteen gets to choose one other person to enter the center.
2. The preteen can use a large fishing net to capture the planes.
3. The preteen can use a water gun to try to shoot the airplanes out of the air, but only direct hits count as “caught” planes.

What to Do: Invite all preteens to shout out what they think the person should choose, like on a game show. Allow the lifeline that garners the loudest shouts.

Give the circle preteens another piece of paper to make new airplanes. Play again with new planes and the lifeline. Compare how many the center person caught with the lifeline. Try all the lifelines until the preteen find one that works best for him or her.

Say: Wow! That was fun and kind of crazy. It looked overwhelming to try to catch one of those planes out of midair. Some of the planes were fast, some nosedived, some did loops in the air. It was obvious that there was just way too much to handle alone. But then we gave you some lifelines and things seemed better.

This is like the temptations you face in life. Remember, we are talking about temptation in this series. Just like in our game, temptations can come so fast and from so many different directions that you can get overwhelmed really fast. But the great thing is, we have the ultimate Lifeline—lifeline that will always make things better: God and God's Word.

Today we are going to look at how we can fight off temptation.

(Open in prayer.)

TEACH:

TEAM UP AGAINST TEMPTATION

Supplies:

- 3 soft balls
- Whiteboard or flipchart and markers
- Bibles
- Temptation Lists from Week 1
- Tape
- Paper and pens/pencils for each preteen
- Trash bucket
- Nerf gun and lots of Nerf ammo
- 6 cardboard signs with a piece of God's armor written on each: Belt of Truth, Breastplate of Righteousness, Sandals of Peace, Shield of Faith, Helmet of Salvation, Sword of the Spirit

Say: Let's talk about being overwhelmed before we get to temptation.

To start, I am going to toss a ball out into the group. Whoever catches it has to come up here, return the ball to me, and write one thing on the board that can be overwhelming. Then I'll toss the ball again, and someone else will come up. You cannot write the same thing on the board if it is already listed.

What to Do: Pass the ball around for a while. Have preteens come up and start writing, then toss another ball. (Use only one marker so just one preteen is writing at a time.) Keep all three balls going out into the group for a couple of minutes.

Once you notice kids begin to struggle to come up with things or the list gets pretty big, you can stop the game. Read through the list with kids to see what they say is overwhelming.

Say: Those are some pretty overwhelming things. In fact, some of these can be so overwhelming you might feel like you're all alone and you want to give up the fight. But let's see what the Bible says about that.

Open your Bible to [Matthew 11:28-30](#).

"Then Jesus said, 'Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light.' "

Say: Let's define some of this verse. The "yoke" God is talking about is not this yoke: An egg "yoke," which is spelled yolk.

Say: A yoke like God is talking about is a wooden beam normally used between a pair of oxen or other animals to enable them to pull together on a load when working in pairs, as oxen usually do. This allows them to work together, to pull more weight than one of them could pull alone.

God is telling us in Matthew that when we get overwhelmed or weary, He wants us to attach to His yoke. That's because God has the power and strength to get us out of any overwhelming situation we can imagine.

So what does this have to do with temptation? Last week we talked about how temptation is real and everywhere. Just knowing this can be a little overwhelming. But what else did we learn?

Say: Right—temptation can be overwhelming, but we can resist it. We also talked about how we can resist temptations. Here is the kicker to all this, though: You will only be able to resist by yourself for so long. If you try to resist temptation all on your own, you will eventually break down and give in. The temptations in your life will overwhelm you, and you will give in to them, leading you down a road toward sin and away from God.

So how do we resist? We ask God for help.

Open your Bible to **Luke 22:40**.

“There he told them, ‘Pray that you will not give into temptation.’ ”

Say: We made a big list of things that tempted you just last week. It was a pretty big list. I saved it as a reminder. Let's look.

(Show the list from last week and hang it on the wall.)

Say: Wow, this is a pretty overwhelming list of temptations. And I'm sure this week these are all still real temptations for you. But think about this: **Luke 22:40** tells us to **“Pray that you will not give into temptation.”** How awesome and easy is that? God knows temptation is a big deal and can easily distract us from Him, so He tells us to pray. He makes it as easy as asking Him to help us to not give in to our temptations.

This is a pretty easy thing to do, and you can get really specific with God. Let's take time right now to pray for God to help you not give into a temptation you are dealing with right now.

(Pass out a small piece of paper and pencil/pen to each of preteen.)

On the paper, write down one temptation you are personally dealing with or maybe even giving in to. Then fold it up and talk to God about it. Ask God to help you resist this specific temptation. Then walk your paper up to the front of the room and drop it into this trash bucket, throwing it away forever.

Now, as easy as praying is, there is still some work we need to do. Remember the yoke we talked about earlier? Both oxen need to pull to get where they must go. We attach ourselves to God's yoke, and He will help with the pulling. But we still have some pulling to do; we are not just along for the ride.

But remember: God gives us some very specific ways to help with the pulling. First, let me remind you of something. We learned last week that God does not tempt us, so temptations come from whom? (Allow for answers.)

Say: That's right. Temptations come from Satan. So knowing Satan is tempting us, how do we fight it off? We pray to God, and then we get ready to do our share of the pulling. And we get ready to fight. Here is what else we can do.

Open your Bibles to **Ephesians 6:10-18**.

"A Final word:

Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places.

Therefore, put on every piece of God's armor so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm. Stand your ground, putting on the belt of truth and the body armor of God's righteousness. For shoes, put on the peace that comes from the Good News so that you will be fully prepared. In addition to all of these, hold up the shield of faith to stop the fiery arrows of the devil. Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere."

What to Do: Have two preteen volunteers come up front. Hand one a Nerf gun with lots of ammo. One volunteer represents Satan. The Nerf ammo represents the temptations Satan has for us. The other volunteer is just a normal preteen dealing with what preteens deal with.

Have volunteers stand on opposite sides of the room. Ask the rest of the preteens to start calling out temptations. For each temptation, the volunteer shoots one dart at the other person. The other volunteer can try to dodge the shots, but eventually will get hit.

After a minute or two, ask the preteen if he or she needs help. If the preteen says yes, tell the other volunteer to stop firing. Have the volunteer being fired upon call out: "Dear God, I need some help!"

Then call up six more preteens and hand each a sign with a piece of God's Armor listed on it. Have these preteens protect the preteen from the temptations. Encourage the audience to continue calling out temptations, and see how many hit the preteen now. Tell the preteen to stand tall and not back down as the firing starts again. Have the entire group walk forward together until the one firing can no longer shoot because the group over takes him or her.

Say: Ephesians 6 does not tell us to stand there and let God do all the work. It tells us to do some very specific things to fight off Satan. God tell us put on God's Armor and fight off Satan's attack.

Once we pray to God for His help, the battle begins. Our job now is to walk next to God with His armor protecting us and walk right over the evil one. There will be setbacks in life, but if we keep asking for God's help and keep fighting the battle with Him, it will get easier.

(Thank preteens and have them return to their seats.)

Say: We know temptation can be overwhelming. We can fight hard on our own, but in the end we will lose. God's Word reminds us of this Bottom Line:

Say: The battle with temptation is overwhelming, and only with God can we win the battle.

(Close in prayer and dismiss to small groups.)

SMALL GROUPS: FOLLOW GOD'S PATH

Supplies:

- 1 paper plate for each preteen
- Pencils/pens
- 1 paper plate with "God" written on it
- Prize for each preteen

What to Do: Pass out a paper plate to each student in your small group. Tell them to write an activity that can help them avoid temptation. Let them work together because there can be no duplicates. (Some examples include: personal prayer, daily Bible reading, dressing modestly, choosing appropriate music, music, and media.)

Once the group has one plate per preteen with an activity on it, tell everyone that the floor is now all temptation and their plates are the stepping stones to keep away from temptation. Spread out the paper plates in a line across the room and tell preteens they need to immediately stand on the plates to keep away from temptation. Hand the last preteen in line the extra plate with "God" written on it.

On "go," preteens must move forward by only stepping on the paper plates. The only way they can advance is with the extra plate at the end, so the last player in line passes the plate forward. The first player in line then places the extra plate on the floor and all players advance one plate forward. Repeat this with the last player sending the plate behind him or her to the front to allow the group to advance.

When the last one crosses the finish line designated by you, the group gets a prize.

Say: Great job, everyone! That was great to see you working together. This activity makes me think about our days as we walk with temptation all around us.

If we stay on the right path with God, we will get to the end safe and sound, right?

Ask:

- What happens if we fall off the path?
- Is it okay if we fall off the path? Why or why not?
- How do we get back on right path?
- What would happen if we tried to skip or even eliminate a step on the path?

Say: Remember that God wants us to bring Him into our fight with temptation. We can do that by following some steps—living a life close to God, reading His Word, talking with God daily, listening to Him, and following His plans for us.

If we try to skip steps or not do some of them, we may be okay for while, but we will eventually slip and fall off the path. When we do, and it happens, we need to get back up and ask for God's help to start walking the path again.

(Close in prayer.)