



One truth shared: Even when we lose our way because of temptation, God promises to provide a way out.

So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.

1 Corinthians 10:12-13

False Security Is Crushed by Faithful Presence

It's a commonly asked question: "Why do bad things happen to good people?" Why would God allow something bad to happen to us—his followers? When trouble or hardships come into our lives, we often find it easier to question or even blame God than to trust in him. And this is not unique to us, the Israelites did it too.

When the Israelites wandered in the desert for 40 years, they grumbled and complained about food. God gave them food. They grumbled and complained about that food. They chose to ignore God's way and faced severe consequences as a result. Read 1 Corinthians 10:1-13. Ask yourself, "Why do people repeat the same mistake over and over?"

Maybe the question ought to be, "Why do I repeatedly make the same mistake over and over?" In some way and to varying degree, our lives imitate what others have gone through. People of all ages have grumbled and complained. You are not the first to face similar "pet sins" through life. They never seem to really go away. How easy to think, "I can conquer this sin, after all, didn't God say I wouldn't be tempted beyond what I can bear?" Later, I end up eating those words when I succumb to temptation.

Here's the painful truth: "No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind." What an ugly mess life becomes when the agenda for our lives gets disconnected from God's agenda. Listen to God's warning, "If you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!"

But here's another truth: "God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it." What way out is that? It's the gospel message that Jesus was tempted in every way as we are. Where we failed, he succeeded. He made right all our wrongs.

God know the limits to your strength and power. Trust that in the moment of temptation, he will help you stand up under its weight so you don't fall.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, there are times you allow hardships to be part of my life. Too often, I grumble or complain about them. When facing temptation, I give up too easily. Help me remember that Jesus is my way back to you. And in the moment of hardship and temptation, be faithful in your promise to help me bear it and overcome with your strength. Amen.

Foundations Teen Facilitators Guide

Year C – Lent 3

Crushed

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Starting the Discussion: This first section is intended to be light and easy, to engage and get the conversation going. Have a little fun with these questions.

Activity Name: The Marshmallow Test

- Needed: audio/video to watch YouTube video
- Introductory explanation: The Marshmallow Test explores self-control (or lack of it) in a group of children. Children were given a plate of marshmallows and told to wait fifteen minutes. If they could successfully do so, they would get two marshmallows. Otherwise, they would only get one. Let's watch ...
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QX_oy9614HQ
- Questions:
 - What kids could you relate to the most?
 - Everybody faces a plate of "marshmallow" temptations. Think about a choice you made over the past week (big or small) where you caved in and wish you could have a do over. What made it difficult to resist? (Let kids respond freely. It could be a food, a video game, sports, etc.)

Connecting: This section serves as a bridge between the opening conversation and the body of the study/discussion. It should get the group thinking about the topic/text even before they've looked at it.

We face plate of temptation every day. We even pray, "Lead us not into temptation." Let's find out how God provides a way out for us when we face temptation.

Digging In: Here we want to dig into some texts or the text for the day and see what Scripture says. The questions are meant to be open ended to give a beginning of a scriptural conversation. These are a guide for a spiritual and scriptural conversation.

- Read **1 Corinthians 10:1-13**. In the situations where the Israelites died—for example verse 9 when they died from snake bites—God provided a way out. Read **Numbers 21:4-9**. What was the way out God provided for his people?
- Paul tells us these things happened as examples for us, so we don't set our hearts on evil things (v. 6). What encouragement does Jesus give in **Matthew 26:42**?
- Read again **1 Corinthians 10:12,13**. Pick out and then explain two things you want to remember the next time you face your own "marshmallow test."
- Read **Hebrews 4:15**, then **Hebrews 2:18**. What's the importance of reading them in that order as you face your marshmallow tests?

Conclusion: Here we want to wrap up the discussion, perhaps circling back to the "connecting question" above.

- DISCUSS: In a sense, God and the devil can use "marshmallows" in our life to test us. What outcome is God looking for? What outcome is the devil hoping for?
- It's true, "The spirit is willing, but the body is weak." Challenge for this week: Try to have one good conversation with a parent or role model. Ask them for their help in dealing with one "marshmallow."