

# 28

## Withstanding Temptation

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**OBJECTIVE**

Each young man will have a greater desire to withstand worldly pressures and resist temptation.

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**PREPARATION**

1. Prayerfully study Joshua 24:15; Proverbs 3:5–6; Matthew 16:26; Ephesians 6:10–18; 1 Nephi 8:24–34; 2 Nephi 9:28–29; 28:20–26; Alma 34:32; 37:35; and Doctrine and Covenants 20:32–33; 62:1.
  2. Materials needed:
    - a. Copies of the scriptures (each young man should bring his own).
    - b. Pencils for marking scriptures.
  3. Prepare a beautifully wrapped package containing dirt or trash.
  4. If it is available in your area, show “Honesty Leads to Integrity,” on *Family Home Evening Video Supplement* (53276).
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**SUGGESTED  
LESSON  
DEVELOPMENT**

Object lesson

**Be Not Deceived**

Display the beautifully wrapped package. Let the young men guess what the package contains.

- What do you expect to find in a package like this?

Invite one of the young men to open the gift. As he discovers the trash or dirt, explain that the world often deceives us in this way. Many of the things the world calls exciting or glamorous are actually worthless.

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Quotations and discussion

**Recognizing Temptations and Deceptions**

Read and discuss the following statements.

President Spencer W. Kimball said:

“All of you . . . know of Satan, the father of lies. You know how he turns the truth into a lie. He garnishes evil to make it appear beautiful, pleasing, easy, and even good” (“The Blessings and Responsibilities of Womanhood,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1976, p. 70).

- What evil or harmful things has Satan “garnished” so that today many people think they are pleasant or valuable?

To illustrate this point, read and discuss the following statement from Elder W. Eugene Hansen of the Seventy:

“One of the most critical challenges mankind faces today is to recognize the difference between happiness and pleasure. Satan and his forces have become extremely effective in their effort to convince people that pleasure should be the most sought-after objective. He slyly promises that wherever found, pleasure will bring happiness.

“Our television and movie screens are filled with not-so-subtle messages that encourage and persuade young and old alike to unbridle their passions and they will experience happiness. The results of this reckless course should be so apparent as we watch the tremendous social and psychological costs continue to mount. The increasing incidence of teenage pregnancy, abortion, rape, child molestation, sexual harassment, assault, drug

addiction, disease, alcoholism, and broken homes are all influenced by this persuasion. And the alarming statistics continue to testify, but with little if any effect” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1993, pp. 110–11, or *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, p. 82).

- How can we avoid being deceived by the world’s values and philosophies?
- What might your friends ask you to do that is against the commandments?
- What temptations does a young man your age encounter most frequently?
- What incorrect ideas or philosophies does the world teach young people?
- How might your peers try to persuade you to break the commandments?

Scripture and discussion

Remind the young men that worldly people have always tried to tempt or discourage those who are righteous. Read or retell the story of Lehi’s dream and the people in the great and spacious building (see 1 Nephi 8:24–34).

- How does the world try to entice you to sin?

If the young men do not name things like the following, you might want to mention these typical rationalizations:

1. “It’s your life. Do your own thing. Nobody can tell you what to do.”
2. “Everyone is doing it. It’s natural. It’s better to find out before you are married whether you are compatible.”
3. “I dare you to try it. No one will know.”
4. “It’s fun. Just one won’t hurt you.”

Discuss how a young man might respond to each rationalization.

Adviser presentation

Explain that one of the best ways to avoid sin is to decide now to keep the commandments. If a young man is determined to keep the commandments, he will do his best to avoid unwholesome situations. When he feels peer pressure or faces a persuasive temptation, he will not waver because he has already made the decision to do right.

Scriptures and discussion

Have the young men read and mark Joshua 24:15 and Alma 37:35.

- Why is it “wisdom” to keep the commandments?

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### **The Gospel Protects Us from Evil and Danger**

Quotation, discussion, and scripture

Read and discuss the following statement by Elder Hansen:

“Real joy and happiness come from living in such a way that our Heavenly Father will be pleased with us. In section 52 of the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord tells us he will give us ‘a pattern in all things, that ye may not be deceived; for Satan is abroad in the land, and he goeth forth deceiving the nations’ (v. 14).

“That pattern is the gospel of Jesus Christ in its fulness, the gospel which we are so blessed to have” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1993, p. 111; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, pp. 82–83).

- How does the gospel protect us from Satan’s deceptions?

Remind the young men that Heavenly Father understands Satan’s methods and has given us prophets and scriptures to help us recognize and resist them.

Have the young men read 2 Nephi 9:28–29 and 2 Nephi 28:20–26.

- According to these passages, what methods will Satan use to tempt people in the last days?
- How can we be sure we are hearkening “unto the counsels of God” and not “unto the precepts of men”?

Quotations

Emphasize that Heavenly Father has revealed his will about every sin or philosophy mentioned earlier. As members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, we are blessed to have living prophets who warn us about the false ideas and evil practices that Satan promotes today.

Have the young men read and briefly discuss some of the following statements from General Authorities. Choose those most appropriate for the young men in your class.

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### **Selfishness**

Elder Marvin J. Ashton of the Council of the Twelve said:

“One of the greatest accomplishments of Satan in these last days is his success in turning men’s affection towards the destructive, the fleeting, or the worldly. Rather than planning for that which is best for all, the world is becoming increasingly ‘me-centered.’ On every hand we have many group leaders saying, ‘We have a right.’ ‘We demand.’ Many young people believe that love has ‘rights’ one can demand of a loved one. For example, a young man often says, ‘If you love me, you will let me. . . .’ He would take what he supposes are his rights rather than serving the higher standards of morality. Such a request does not bespeak love.

“Day-to-day acts of service, whether for good or evil, may not seem important, but they are building cords of love that become so strong they can seldom be broken. Ours is to place our areas of love in proper perspective. Meaningful love always works for our eternal progress and not against it” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1981, p. 30; or *Ensign*, May 1981, p. 23).

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### **Immorality**

President Spencer W. Kimball said:

“Then in the area of one of Satan’s most destructive evils, we strongly warn all our people from childhood to old age to beware of the chains of bondage, suffering, and remorse which come from improper use of the body.

“The human body is the sacred home of the spirit child of God, and unwarranted tampering with or defilement of this sacred tabernacle can bring only remorse and regret. We urge: stay clean, uncontaminated, undefiled. . . .

“ . . . No indecent exposure or pornography or other aberrations to defile the mind and spirit. No fondling of bodies, one’s own or that of others, and no sex between persons except in proper marriage relationships. This is positively prohibited by our Creator in all places, at all times and we reaffirm it” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1974, pp. 8–9; or *Ensign*, May 1974, p. 7).

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### **Pornography**

President Spencer W. Kimball said:

“The stench of obscenity and vulgarity reaches and offends the heavens. It putrefies all it touches.

“Each person must keep himself clean and free from lusts. He must shun ugly, polluted thoughts and acts as he would an enemy. Pornography and erotic stories and pictures are worse than polluted food. Shun them. The body has power to rid itself of sickening food. That person who entertains filthy stories or pornographic pictures and literature records them in his marvelous human computer, the brain, which can’t forget this filth. Once recorded, it will always remain there, subject to recall—filthy images” (*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1982], pp. 282–83).

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### **Homosexuality**

President Spencer W. Kimball said:

“Let it therefore be clearly stated that the seriousness of the sin of homosexuality is equal to or greater than that of fornication or adultery; and that *the Lord’s Church will as readily take action to disfellowship or excommunicate the unrepentant practicing homosexual as it will the unrepentant fornicator or adulterer*” (*The Miracle of Forgiveness* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1969], pp. 81–82; italics in original).

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## Marriage and Parenthood

President Spencer W. Kimball said:

“There are many who talk and write against marriage. Even some of our own delay marriage and argue against it. To all who are deceived by these ‘doctrines of devils,’ we urge the return to normalcy. We call upon all people to accept normal marriage as a basis for true happiness. The Lord did not give sex to man for a plaything. Basically marriage presupposes a family. . . .

“Certainly anyone who purposely denies himself or herself honorable parenthood is to be pitied, for the great joy of parenthood is fundamental in the normal, full life” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1974, p. 7; or *Ensign*, May 1974, p. 6).

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## Family Neglect

President David O. McKay said:

“When one puts businesses or pleasure, or the earning of additional income, above his home, he that moment starts on the down grade to soul weakness. When the club becomes more attractive to any man than his home, it is time for him to confess in bitter shame that he has failed to measure up to the supreme opportunity of his life, and flunked in the final test of true manhood.

“The poorest shack in which love prevails over a united family is of far greater value to God and future humanity than any other riches. In such a home God can work miracles, and will work miracles. Pure hearts in a pure home are always in whispering distance of Heaven” (*Church News*, 7 Sept. 1968, p. 4; citing J. E. McCulloch, *Home: The Savior of Civilization* [Washington, D.C.: The Southern Co-operative League, 1924], p. 42).

Referring to President McKay’s statement, President Ezra Taft Benson, thirteenth President of the Church, said: “Your supreme opportunity in life is fatherhood! These words directed to fathers by President David O. McKay should be framed by every father” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1981, p. 47; or *Ensign*, May 1981, p. 35).

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## Respect for Women

President Spencer W. Kimball said:

“We have all been blessed with special women in our lives—women who have had a deep and lasting influence upon us. Their contribution has been and is most important to us and is something which will be of everlasting value to us.

“Our wives, mothers, daughters, sisters, and friends are all the spirit children of our Heavenly Father. I hope we will always bear that in mind, my brothers, in terms of how we treat women. The sisters in this dispensation include many of the most noble daughters of our Heavenly Father. Let us always remember that God is no respecter of persons, but he loves us all, men and women, boys and girls, with a perfect love” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1979, p. 71; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1979, pp. 48–49).

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## Stealing

President Spencer W. Kimball said:

“The Lord told Adam’s posterity and carved it into the stone plates, ‘Thou shalt not steal.’ (Exodus 20:15.) All parents should train their children against this deadly thing which can destroy their characters. Honesty is socially and culturally right. Liars and cheaters are both dishonest and alien to our culture. Dishonesty of all kinds is most reprehensible. . . .

“We call upon all the . . . members of this church to be honest, full of integrity, pay for what they get, and take only that which they have properly paid for. We must teach our children honor and integrity” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1975, p. 6; or *Ensign*, May 1975, p. 6).

Video presentation

If it is available in your area, you may want to show “Honesty Leads to Integrity” at this time.

Adviser presentation	Summarize your discussion of these topics by reminding the young men that Heavenly Father has given us this counsel to help us avoid the sorrow and suffering that come to those who follow the world and break these commandments.
Scripture and discussion	<p>Have the young men read and mark Matthew 16:26.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What does this verse mean?</li> <li>• How might a young man gain the world but lose his soul?</li> </ul>

### **Heavenly Father Will Help Us Resist Temptation**

Scriptures and discussion	<p>Have the young men read and mark Proverbs 3:5–6.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why should a young man “lean not unto [his] own understanding”?</li> <li>• How can we discover what Heavenly Father wants us to do?</li> </ul> <p>Have the young men read and mark Doctrine and Covenants 20:32–33.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the Lord’s formula for resisting temptation and worldly pressures?</li> </ul> <p>Have the young men read and mark Doctrine and Covenants 62:1.</p> <p>Explain that <i>succor</i> means to relieve. We learn from this verse that Jesus Christ understands our weaknesses and knows how to help us overcome them. Heavenly Father will bless us with the power to resist the devil and the world if we pray for help when we are tempted (see 3 Nephi 18:18–20).</p>
Chalkboard discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What can you do to strengthen your desire to keep the commandments?</li> </ul> <p>List responses on the chalkboard. Encourage the young men to commit themselves to do these things.</p>

### **The Armor of God**

Adviser presentation	Emphasize that we cannot live righteously by relying on our own strength, but with the help of the Holy Ghost, we can do whatever is necessary in order to keep the commandments. We can always resist temptation (see 1 Corinthians 10:13) if we obey the Lord and pray for the power of his Spirit to help us.
Scripture and discussion	<p>Read and discuss Ephesians 6:10–18.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What does it mean to “put on the whole armour of God”?</li> <li>• According to these verses, what tools has Heavenly Father provided to protect us from evil and help us resist temptation?</li> </ul>
Quotation	<p>Read the following statement from President N. Eldon Tanner. Explain that by asking these questions, President Tanner outlines key actions that will help us receive the companionship of the Holy Ghost and the power to resist worldly ideas and temptations.</p> <p>“Are we studying the scriptures so that we can increase our knowledge and faith and testimony regarding the gospel? Do we keep the commandments? Are we honest and truthful in our dealings? Do we keep the Sabbath day holy? Do we observe the Word of Wisdom? Do we pay an honest tithing? Do we attend our meetings and respond to the calls made of us by our authorities? Are we virtuous and clean and pure in heart and mind and deed?</p> <p>“Do we fight against the evils around us—pornography, abortion, tobacco, alcohol, drugs? Do we have the courage to stand up for our convictions? Can we truly say we are not ashamed of the gospel of Christ? Do we live peaceably with our neighbors and avoid gossip and backbiting and spreading unfounded rumors? Do we truly love our neighbors as ourselves?</p> <p>“If we can answer yes to these questions, then we will have on the whole armor of God, which will protect us from harm and preserve us from our enemies. . . .</p> <p>“Examine your armor. Is there an unguarded or unprotected place? Determine now to add</p>

whatever part is missing. No matter how antiquated or lacking in parts your armor may be, always remember that it is within your power to make the necessary adjustments to complete your armor” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1979, p. 65; or *Ensign*, May 1979, p. 46).

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### **Conclusion**

#### Testimony

Testify that Heavenly Father will never leave us alone. Though the world is full of temptations and deceptions, if we keep the commandments, follow the prophets, and pray for the companionship of the Holy Ghost to help us make right decisions, we will be able to “stand against the wiles of the devil.”

#### Challenge

Challenge the young men to be on guard against worldly pressures and ideas. Encourage them to set specific goals that will help them develop good habits so that they can answer yes to every one of Elder Tanner’s questions. Challenge them to “put on the whole armour of God” and be valiant disciples of Jesus Christ, ready to stand for truth and righteousness at all times.