

# Running and Resisting

## Topic: Spiritual Warfare (Part Two)

**Purpose of this study:** To help your students learn how to distinguish and overcome temptation and Satan.

### Motivation for teaching this study:

How many times have each of us fallen and given into temptation and succumbed to Satan's strategies in our spiritual lives? Yet many times people speak of "resisting temptation" and "fleeing Satan." The Bible says the exact opposite! We are to flee temptation and resist Satan on every front. If you try to resist temptation in your own strength and flee from the devil (how can you run away from him?) you will repeatedly fail. Obedience can only come by having the right strategy to fight each foe.

### Introducing the Lesson:

You might want to begin with either a personal story of how you dealt with a particular temptation or spiritual battle in your own life or you could begin with some questions. You might ask, "When you first learning how to drive, did you ever step on the gas instead of the brake? What happened? You know we can do the wrong thing at the wrong time in our spiritual lives and experience failure too. Let's look at how to deal with temptation and Satan in our Christian lives." Or you could go this route, "have you ever been frightened by a dog or another animal and tried to run away from it?" Talk about the flight or fight response we all have when encountering danger unexpectedly and the results of each.

The top portion is geared to help stimulate discussion. You can either have students write out their answers and discuss them or just share them openly with the group. Be careful not to get off track!

Proverbs 4:14-15 speaks of being influenced and persuaded by wicked or evil men (those who seek to do contrary to what God wants). In teenager terms this is negative peer pressure or going along with the crowd even when you know it's wrong. Wise people will avoid and flee from the way of those who do evil.

2 Tim. 2:22 encourages us to flee lusts and to pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace. Do not forget to mention the end of the verse encouraging us to pursue these things with those who have pure hearts.

1 Tim. 6:10-11 is similar to the previous verse except the fleeing is to be in regards to the love of money, which leads to all sorts of evil. Perhaps you can illustrate this in the life of a Godly saint committed to God regardless of their salary.

Temptation typically comes to us through our desires such as our flesh, the lust of our eyes, or the boastful pride of life (1 Jn 2:16). It is critical that students can identify at least one area of temptation that **THEY** need to flee from in their own lives.

Satan seeks to devour Christians like a lion and our only recourse in this case is to resist him being firm in our faith. Notice in James it says that Satan will flee from us when we resist him not we will flee from him when he resists us! The devil attacks on many fronts such as fear (Luke 12:4-5, Acts 4:29), doubt (Eve in the garden), and pride (1 Tim. 3:4-6). We must be careful not to give him an opportunity in our lives by unresolved anger toward someone (Eph 4:27), lying (Ananias in Acts 5:3), or giving in to sin (Gen 4:6-8).

Illustrate the three principles of resisting the devil through imagining a burglar breaking into your house. **First** you must detect him "We are not unaware of his schemes" (2 Cor. 2:11b); **second** you must empower yourself "Submit yourselves to God" (James 4:7); **third** you trap or confront "Resist the devil and he will flee from you" (James 4:7b); and fourth reinforce or praise God "Come near to God and he will come near to you" (James 4:8b).

**Policeman illustration:** When someone stands in the middle of the road directing traffic with a policeman's uniform, everyone stops and obeys. They do this not because a man is standing in the middle of the road ordering people around, but because the policeman has the delegated authority to control the traffic. By ourselves we have no authority over Satan, but because of our identification with Jesus Christ, we have delegated authority over Satan the demonic realm (Eph. 1:19-21).

### Closing the Lesson:

Ask your students to identify one area in their lives where they need to flee. Then ask them, "How do you think Satan tries to work again you in your life?"

### Evaluation:

1. Do you students understand the difference between fleeing temptation and resisting Satan?
2. Can your students identify specific areas and personal experiences in their lives where they can apply these truths?
3. How would you go about resisting Satan in a particular situation?