

Small Group Guide: THE LORD'S PRAYER: WORDS YOU THOUGHT YOU KNEW - Everyday Temptation

Opening Question: Share about a “silly temptation” you find hard to resist:

• Example: a certain snack, scrolling social media, hitting the snooze button, etc.

What usually goes through your mind right before you give in?

Opening Prayer: *Lord, thank you for bringing us together today. As we talk about temptation, our thoughts, and your Word, would you help us to be honest, humble, and hopeful. Make us aware of how the enemy works, but even more, show us how faithful you are to provide a way of escape. Renew our minds and strengthen our hearts as we talk. In Jesus' name, amen.*

KEY SERMON POINTS

Main Ideas

God is faithful in every temptation. From 1 Corinthians 10:13 – temptation is “common to man,” and God can be trusted not to let us be tempted beyond what we can bear. He always provides a way of escape.

Temptation follows a predictable flow. From James 1:13–15, Pastor Dan outlined this “flow chart”:

Desire – starts in our thoughts, emotions, and inner desires.

Deception – we start to believe lies and rationalize.

Design – we begin to plan how to act on the temptation.

Disobedience – we cross the line into sin.

Death – sin brings destruction: spiritually, emotionally, relationally, and sometimes physically.

The real battle is in the mind, not just in the behavior. Sinful actions begin with sinful thinking. You don't just stop the behavior; you deal with the thought patterns and desires that lead to it. “Be careful how you think; your life is shaped by your thoughts” (Prov. 4:23).

You must know your “bait.” The enemy uses specific bait tailored to you—often tied to how God wired you (e.g., men being highly visual). If you don't know what your bait is, you'll get hooked repeatedly.

We don't just resist; we replace and refocus. According to 2 Timothy 2:22, we “turn our back” on lustful thoughts and then “give [our] positive attention” to goodness, integrity, love, and peace. What persists, you eventually can't resist—so we must redirect our minds, not just grit our teeth.

Commitment to God's Word is essential. Psalm 119:9 teaches that purity comes by living according to God's Word. The Bible is not an oppressive rule book; it's a protective “median in the road” to keep us from head-on collisions with a destructive culture and a destructive enemy.

The path back to purity is always open. When we've crossed the line, we:

Repent (metanoia – change our mind and direction).

Receive God's forgiveness.

Refocus and replace our old patterns, not planning to repeat the same sin.

Request God's help daily, relying on His faithfulness.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. Read 1 Corinthians 10:13.** What does this verse teach us about the nature of temptation (“common to man”), God’s faithfulness, and the “way of escape”?
 - How does this challenge phrases we often say like, “I just couldn’t stop” or “that’s just how I am”?
- 2. Read James 1:13–15.**
 - Walk through Pastor Dan’s flow: desire → deception → design → disobedience → death.
 - Where in that flow do you tend to notice temptation in your own life?
 - Why is it so crucial to stop between step 1 (desire) and step 2 (deception)?
- 3. Read Proverbs 4:23 and Proverbs 23:19..**
 - According to these verses, how important is our thought life in shaping the rest of our lives?
 - What’s one recent example where your thinking clearly led to a specific behavior (good or bad)?
- 4. Read 2 Timothy 2:22.**
 - What does it practically look like to “turn your back on lustful thoughts”?
 - What are some specific, positive things you can “give your attention to” when you’re tempted (activities, truths, Scriptures, people)?
- 5. Pastor Dan talked about knowing your unique “bait.”**
 - According to the sermon, what are some common types of “bait” the enemy uses in people’s lives (e.g., approval, comfort, control, lust, money, comparison)?
 - Why is it important for a believer to be aware that they do have specific bait the enemy will try to use against them?
- 6. The sermon emphasized that guardrails are not oppression but protection (like a median on a dangerous road).**
 - What are some examples of healthy guardrails Christians, in general, might put in place to avoid temptation (in the areas of technology, relationships, finances, schedule, media, etc.)?
 - How does thinking of God’s Word as “protective guardrails” instead of “restrictive rules” change the way we respond to His commands?
- 7. Pastor Dan distinguished resisting temptation from replacing and refocusing.**
 - In your own words, what is the difference between simply resisting a temptation and intentionally replacing and refocusing your thoughts and actions?
 - What are some practical “replacement” strategies Christians can use when they feel tempted (specific activities, Scriptures, people, or environments)?
- 8. The path back to purity includes repentance, receiving God’s forgiveness, refocusing/ replacing your thoughts with Scripture, and asking God for help.**
 - Why do you think each of these steps is important—not just one or two, but all of them together?

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS (Choose 1 or 2 that apply to you.)

- 1. Identify Your Bait in Writing.** Sometime this week, prayerfully journal:
“What are the top 2–3 ‘baits’ the enemy uses with me?”
“What thoughts usually come right before I give in?”
Ask God to bring these to light.
- 2. Set One New Guardrail.** Choose one practical guardrail that fits your specific struggle (examples: adding an internet filter, a no-phones-in-bedroom rule, changing a commute route, deleting a certain app, setting a spending limit/accountability). Tell at least one trusted Christian friend about it.
- 3. Practice the “Turn & Replace” Habit. When a tempting thought comes this week:**
Consciously “turn your back” (2 Tim. 2:22)—name the thought and reject it.
Immediately replace it by quoting Scripture, praying for someone, listening to worship music, or doing a God-honoring task instead.
- 4. Reaffirm Your Commitment to God’s Word.** Decide on **one** specific way to “live according to God’s Word” this week:
Start or restart a daily Bible reading plan.
Memorize the key verse below.
Before a big decision, ask, “What does Scripture say about this?” and obey it.
- 5. Walk the Path Back (If Needed).** If you’re currently struggling with a recurring sin:
Honestly repent before God (admit it, call it sin, and turn from it).
Receive His forgiveness (1 John 1:9).
Share with a trusted believer for accountability.
Ask God daily for strength and keep refocusing your mind on His Word.

MEMORY VERSE for the Week:

“Be careful how you think; your life is shaped by your thoughts.” (Proverbs 4:23, GNT)

Closing Prayer: *Father, thank you that you are faithful and that you always provide a way of escape when we are tempted. Thank you that we don’t have to be slaves to our old thoughts and habits. This week, help us to recognize the bait the enemy uses against us, to see the early stages of temptation, and to turn to you before we cross the line. Renew our minds with your Word and show us where to put healthy guardrails in place. Strengthen each person in this group, and let our lives honor you in what we think, say, and do. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.*