

Resisting Temptation

In the Second Week's Lesson for Step 3, questions # 1 and 2, it says, "The first part of Step 3 says, "We **MADE A DECISION**" to turn our will and our lives..." Just BELIEVING in your head that **God CAN help you** is NOT ENOUGH. You must MAKE A DECISION, and that decision is a **DAILY CHOICE**, sometimes even a **MOMENT BY MOMENT CHOICE, of DECIDING whether you will follow what God says**, or what someone else says, or how you FEEL, etc do you see how **DECIDING to follow God's instructions for living** (in the Bible) could help you to NOT give in to those behaviors?"

QUESTION: "No, I don't see how deciding can keep me from sin, as I have decided so many times not to sin. But then I go and do it again. So, please, help me to understand this?"

ANSWER: The answer is in "**deciding to follow God's instructions in the Bible**" NOT in just "deciding not to sin." Obviously, we can't cover all of God's instructions in this one paper, as that would be basically the whole Bible! Let's just look at some of God's instructions, and Jesus' example of HOW TO DO IT, when it comes to resisting temptation to sin - ANY kind of temptation. In Matthew 4:1-11, Jesus is being tempted. He was almost at the point of death from 40 days of no food (fasting), and He was physically at a very low point. Satan attacked Him first in the area of food, and later in two other areas, but Jesus didn't stop to rationalize about His situation, or argue with Satan. **He immediately quoted Scripture, God's word, OUT LOUD to Satan.** You need to find some **Scriptures relating to YOUR particular weakness where Satan tempts you the most, and memorize them**, or have them with you always on little cards, and **be ready to combat the temptation** that will come to you. **That's how you "make the decision" ahead of time.** HAVE those SCRIPTURES IN YOUR HEART and MIND, ready to stand against the devil in close combat. Ephesians 6:10-18 talks about us putting on the armor of God to stand against the schemes or tricks of the devil, and verse 17 calls the word of God "the sword of the Spirit." **You may need to hack away at the devil with that sword.** It's like a man deciding that the next time someone breaks into his house to rob him, he will grab a gun and defend himself, and not lie down and be a victim. All too often, we lie down and become a victim as soon as Satan dangles that particular temptation in our face (or shoots thoughts into our mind).

Our problem is that **we have not really DECIDED to resist temptation with the word of God no matter what!** We still believe there may come a time when the temptation is TOO GREAT, and God's word will not be enough. THAT'S the decision you have to make. I know with my own drinking, I promised God over and over again for many years that I would not drink. I didn't wait until a time came when I stopped liking alcohol and what it did, but **I came to a place where OBEYING GOD was more important to me than ANY FEELINGS that were aroused by the old temptation and triggers that would set me off to start drinking.** I came to realize finally, that the reason I failed all those other times, was that I secretly had allowed myself the permission to drink if "things got really bad" or I had a "really bad day" or whatever. In other words, I would make the decision to drink according to my own set of circumstances, and I had not really made a decision to NEVER drink again. Once I made that decision, and used the word of God to help me in times of temptation, I had the victory. I now have a few weeks short of nine years clean and sober!

Satan likes us to be addicted to something, because it seems like we have lost our FREE WILL, and it is having FREE WILL that makes us like God - it's one of the ways in which we are "created in the image of God" (Genesis 1:26-27). Satan lies and deceives us into thinking the addiction controls us and we no longer have free will to choose otherwise. It's true, **we need God's power to help get out of the bondage of addiction**, but in no way have we lost our free will to choose. With your free will decide, make a choice, **to OBEY GOD no matter how**

many triggers, how many ways Satan "pushes your buttons", and SPEAK the WORD of GOD to Satan like a weapon. It is a weapon, remember - the SWORD of the SPIRIT. **You must DECIDE that you really want to resist Satan at all costs.** James 4:7 says, "Submit to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." To SUBMIT to God is when you SURRENDER your RIGHT to keep committing whatever the sin is, and you begin to OBEY GOD!